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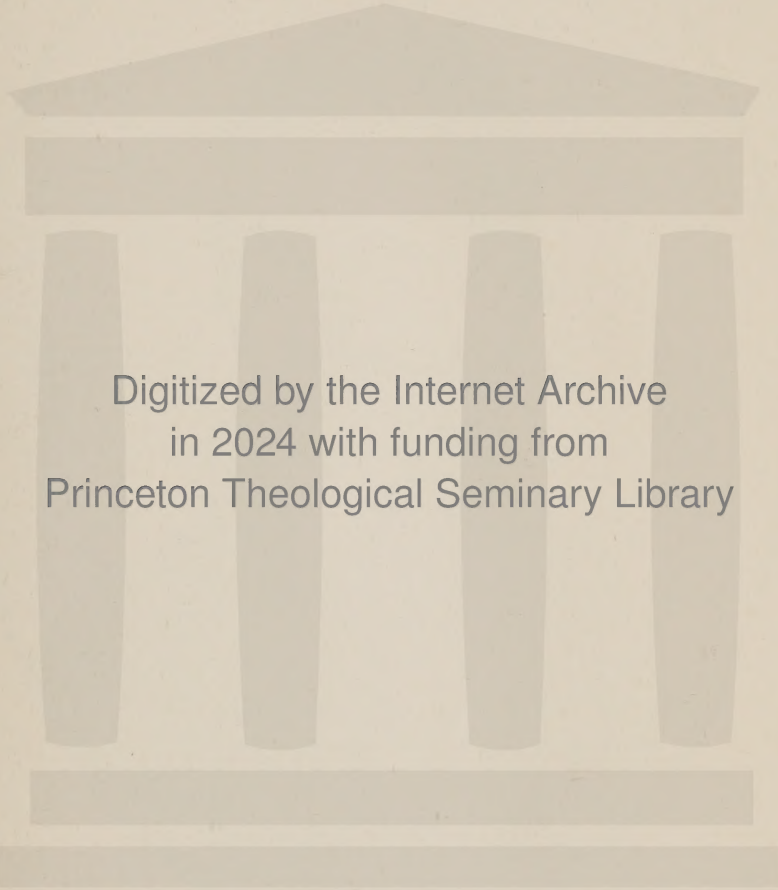




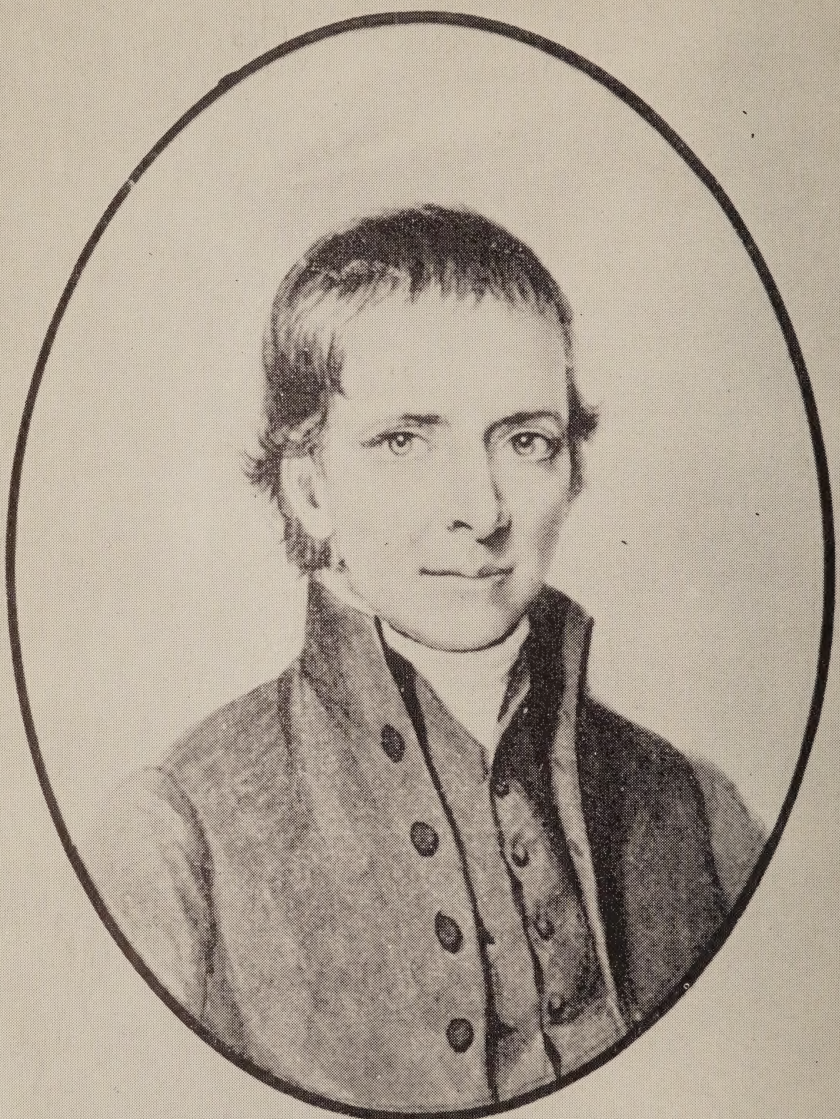
*A History  
of the  
Evangelical Church*







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ALBRIGHT

JACOB ALBRIGHT





# A HISTORY OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

By

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The Evangelical School of Theology*



HARRISBURG, PA.  
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DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO  
GAVE THEIR LIVES THAT  
THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
MIGHT BE BORN AND CON-  
TINUE TO SERVE DURING  
THIS CENTURY AND A HALF.





## PREFACE

THE General Conference in 1934, realizing the need for a new and more up-to-date history of the Evangelical Church, instructed the Board of Publication and the Historical Society to have such a work prepared.

Having been invited by the Board of Publication and the Historical Society to write the manuscript for such a history the author accepted the task in 1935 and has labored to produce a work that would be accurate in fact and clear in interpretation. Many interesting personalities might have been included and those that are included might have been treated more fully if space and balance had allowed.

Just before the epoch-making session of the General Conference in 1839 a very important article, undoubtedly written by W. W. Orwig, appeared in *Der Christliche Botschafter* calling attention to the great need for a history of the Evangelical Church and setting forth the major items which should be included in such a work.

The General Conference in 1843 appointed the Rev. John Dreisbach to write such a history of the denomination. Dreisbach had been a contemporary of Jacob Albright and the early leaders of the Evangelical Church and was the logical person to receive this assignment. By the time of the General Conference session in 1847 he had prepared fifteen sheets of the intended manuscript and then asked to be relieved from further writing. W. W. Orwig was commissioned to complete this task.

Using the meager sources assembled by Dreisbach, W. W. Orwig began his much more systematic study in 1854 and in 1857 there was issued from the Evangelical Press in Cleveland, Ohio, his *Geschichte der Evangelischen Gemeinschaft*. This book of about 400 pages related the history of the denomination to the year 1845. An English edition, *A History of the Evangelical Association*, appeared from the same press the following year. Although this was the very first work of its kind, Orwig's history is beyond any doubt the finest historical work thus far produced by the Evangelical Church. The author had the advantage of living through the formative years of the church and was gifted with a very excellent historical sense and a broad spirit of interpretation. For the earlier years to 1836 Orwig includes in his volume the record of the proceedings of the conferences and also the lists of appointments. After this date such material was printed in the official organ of the church, *Der Christliche Botschafter*. Although there is no topical or logical but only a chronological arrangement of the material in this first history, the material is, nevertheless, amply and fairly interpreted and is readily available.

Upon this work of Bishop Orwig, Bishop Reuben Yeakel leaned very heavily when he produced the first volume of his *History of the Evangelical Association* which came from the Evangelical Press in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1894. His second volume appeared the following year and brought the history of the denomination down to 1875.

A very unusual work and exceedingly valuable in its rich source materials appeared in 1888 entitled, *Landmarks of the Evangelical Association*. This book, printed in Reading, Pennsylvania, was prepared by Bishop S. C. Breyfogel and contains his translated excerpts from the official records of the annual and general conference sessions from the beginning to 1840 and excerpts from the records of the General Conference and of the East Pennsylvania Conference from 1840 to 1887, as well as many biographical and statistical tables. While these translations by Bishop Breyfogel are only excerpts from the original minutes they are in each case the most important parts of each record.

In 1896 a large volume entitled, *Evangelical Annals*, diligently prepared by the Rev. Ammon Stapleton, came from the press of the United Evangelical Church located at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The first 554 pages of this work present many valuable biographical, statistical, and regional data, and the concluding section forms the best history of the United Evangelical Church. Throughout the major portion of his life Dr. Stapleton was searching for historical materials and added perhaps more than any other to the splendid collection of sources now in the possession of the Historical Society. It is to be regretted that he never found time to arrange his valuable materials in a completely organized form. In 1908 his interesting book *Flashlights on Evangelical History* appeared in York, Pennsylvania, and in 1917 his excellent study of Jacob Albright entitled *Old Time Evangelical Evangelism*, a posthumous work edited by H. B. Hartzler, was issued by the Evangelical Press at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The wealth of detailed material, relating to families and regions in Pennsylvania in particular, presented in the works of Dr. Stapleton are of great historical worth and the contribution Dr. Stapleton made to the history of the Evangelical Church is inestimable as a scanning of the bibliography in Appendix G will clearly show.

The only other history of the Evangelical Church published by the denomination is a small interpretative work by Bishop S. P. Spreng which was published in 1913 as a handbook for study groups and young people's courses. After the merging of the churches in 1922 a new edition was prepared which was printed in 1927 and which has continued to serve as an introductory study for ministers and laity. Bishop Spreng's greatest contribution to the history of the denomination was his work *The Life and Labors of John Seybert* which appeared in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1888. This is a full length biography of Bishop

Seybert based upon a very careful study of Seybert's *Journal* and upon the work of Solomon Neitz *Das Leben und Wirken des seligen Johannes Seybert* (The Life and Work of the Sainted John Seybert), which appeared in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1862. Other important writings of Bishop Spreng are mentioned in the body of this history and also in Appendix G.

In addition to these works dealing specifically with the history of the denomination there are a number of particularly valuable sources which must be mentioned. In 1811, three years after the death of Jacob Albright, his associate George Miller published in Reading, Pennsylvania, a book entitled *Kurze Beschreibung der wirkenden Gnade Gottes bey dem erleuchteten evangelischen Prediger Jakob Albrecht* (A Brief Description of the Active Grace of God through that enlightened Evangelical Preacher Jacob Albright). In this work on Albrecht, Miller included what appears to be the autobiography of the founder of the denomination, pp. 6-27. This is written in the first person and is printed throughout in quotation marks. In 1834 this work was reprinted in New Berlin, Pennsylvania, with an additional chapter on the life of George Miller. In 1879 Reuben Yeakel, basing his study upon this work and John Dreisbach's *Journal*, published his book, *Albrecht und seine Mitarbeiter* in Cleveland, Ohio, which in 1883 appeared in English as *Albright and His Co-Laborers*. This work included biographical studies of Albright, John Walter, George Miller and John Dreisbach and is a valuable source particularly for the earlier period of the church.

The official records of the early annual and general conference sessions as well as the complete files of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and *The Evangelical-Messenger* were available to the present writer for this study. So, too, have been the printed records of the later conference sessions and other weekly and monthly publications of the denomination. All the volumes listed in the bibliography in Appendix G have been examined by the author; and indeed no known sources have been left untouched that this work may be a comprehensive history of the Evangelical Church. There has been no attempt made to list a bibliography of general works related to religious history in America. The most important of these related sources have been consulted and, where thought necessary, have been quoted in the footnotes.

No one can undertake so large a responsibility without incurring many and large obligations to others. To the many persons who have helped by calling attention to materials which might have been overlooked and in numerous instances by making such materials available; to the bishops of the church who have read the manuscript; to his theological students who have helped to prepare the graphical studies in Appendix F; to the Advisory Committee consisting of Dr. J. D.



Shortess, Dr. S. J. Umbreit, Dr. Paul Eller, Dr. E. G. Frye, and Dr. W. E. Peffley for their wise counsel and guidance, the author is deeply grateful and expresses his sincere appreciation. Of particular help have been a number of unpublished theses in various university libraries, which have been prepared from original sources relating to the denomination.

In order that the author could have first hand information regarding the work of the Evangelical Church in Europe the Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation appointed him a Fellow of this Foundation for study in Europe in 1937, for which honor and kindness the author is profoundly grateful.

This volume has been written with the hope that it will fill the need for a clear statement and comprehensive historical analysis of the beginning and development of the Evangelical Church.

R. W. ALBRIGHT.

*Reading, Pennsylvania,  
July 16, 1942.*

## KEY TO SOURCES

Because of the numerous references in the footnotes to certain major sources for this study, the following keys have been devised for use in reference to these works:

AL—Albright, R. W., and Leedy, R. B.—*A Story of Religious Education in the Evangelical Church, 1832-1932*, Cleveland, 1932.

BL—Breyfogel, S. C.—*Landmarks of the Evangelical Association, 1800-1887*, Reading, Pa., 1888.

CB—*Der Christliche Botschafter*.

EM—*The Evangelical-Messenger*.

GCJ—*General Conference Journal of the Evangelical Association*.

GCJU—*General Conference Journal of the United Evangelical Church*.

GK—*Glaubenslehre und Kirchen-Zucht-Ordnung der Evangelischen Gemeinschaft*.

MLA—Miller, Georg—*Leben Erfahrung und Amtsführung Zweyer Evangelischer Prediger, Jakob Albrecht und Georg Miller*, Neu-Berlin, 1834.

OH—Orwig, W. W.—*History of the Evangelical Association*, Cleveland, 1858.

SA—Stapleton, Ammon—*Annals of the Evangelical Association of North America and History of the United Evangelical Church*, Harrisburg, 1900.

SF—Stapleton, Ammon—*Flashlights on Evangelical History*, York, 1908.

SW—Stapleton, Ammon—*A Wonderful Story of Old Time Evangelical Evangelism, being a Simple Account of the Life and Times of the Rev. Jacob Albright*, Harrisburg, 1917.

YH(1)—Yeakel, Reuben—*History of the Evangelical Association*, Volume I, Cleveland, 1894.

YH(2)—*Ibid.*, Volume II, Cleveland, 1895.

YA—Yeakel, Reuben—*Jacob Albright and His Co-Laborers*, Cleveland, 1883.

YR—Yost, William—*Reminiscences*, Cleveland, 1911.





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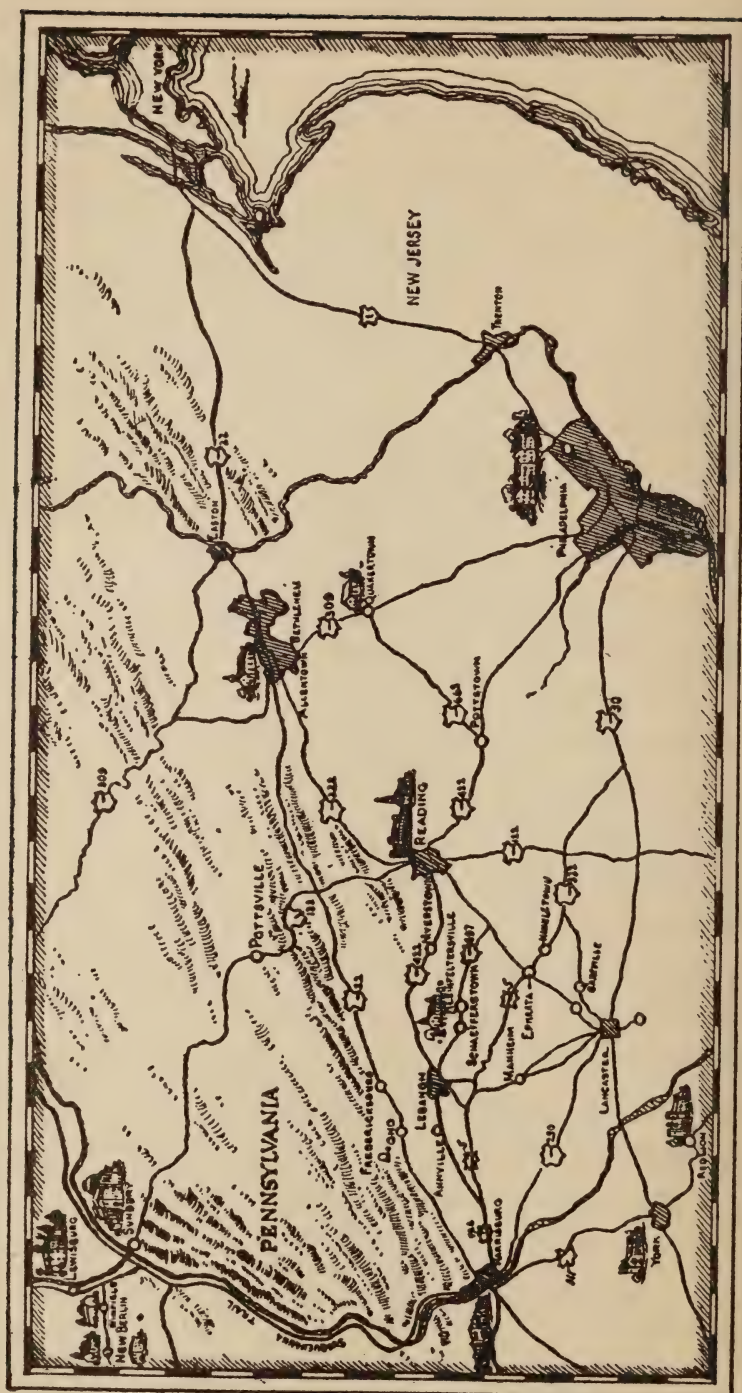
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## LEGEND TO HISTORICAL MAP

*Hinkletown, Pa.* Jacob Albright's farm and tile kiln are located near Hinkletown. The property of Adam Riegel adjoins Albright's farm.

*Bareville, Pa.* Bishop Newcomer's (U. B.) birthplace is nine miles east of Lancaster, near Bareville.

*Kleinfeltersville, Pa.* Early Evangelical Conference held here in 1807. First memorial church for Jacob Albright is erected here. Albright's grave is in the adjoining cemetery. The home where he died may be seen from the grave.

*Manheim, Pa.* John Seybert was converted here in 1810.

*Schaefferstown, Pa.* Near the present public square Albright probably preached one of his first sermons in 1796.

*Red Lion, Pa.* The United Brethren have their most costly church edifice here; Evangelicals our most cathedral-like structure (and largest Sunday school).

*York, Pa.* Bishop Otterbein was pastor here. Both denominations have many congregations here.

*Lancaster, Pa.* Center of the early activities of both denominations. Each has two progressive congregations at present.

*Harrisburg, Pa.* The Publishing House of the Evangelical Church is located here. Both denominations very strong here.

*New Berlin, Pa.* First church building and Publishing House of the Evangelical Church established here in 1816. Marker is placed on the site. Here also may be seen the Union Seminary campus, later Central Pennsylvania College (now Albright, at Reading).

*Lewisburg, Pa.* Evangelical Orphanage and Home for the Aged.

*Sunbury, Pa.* Most costly church edifice in the Evangelical Church.

*Annvile, Pa.* Lebanon Valley College (U. B.).

*Lebanon, Pa.* Very strong U. B. center. First Sunday school of Evangelical Church established here in 1832.

*Pottstown, Pa.* Near here Jacob Albright was born May 1, 1759.

*Quakertown, Pa.* First class of Evangelical Church formed by Albright in 1800.

*Allentown, Easton, and Pottsville,* county seats respectively of Lehigh, Northampton, and Schuylkill Counties in which Jacob Albright did much of his preaching.

*Reading, Pa.* Both denominations strong here. Albright College (Evangelical) and the Evangelical School of Theology are located here.

*Winfield, Pa.* The original Eyer barn, where in 1816 the memorable conference was held which resolved to hold the first General Conference.

*Ono, Pa.* Grave and marker of John Walter, early leader and first poet of the Evangelical Church.

*Fredericksburg, Pa.* First building of Schuylkill College (now Albright) still stands here.

*Philadelphia, Pa.* Evangelical Home for the Aged is on Route 1.



## CHAPTER I

### EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN BACKGROUNDS

Not the least important of the many valuable contributions which Europe has made to American civilization is that large group of German people who emigrated from southern Germany between the years 1683 and 1755. Living in the Palatinate had become unbearable because of religious oppression; the constant state of war in the late seventeenth century brought the periodic destruction of property and crops. While it was regarded as a very dangerous undertaking to cross the Atlantic, it was the only plan which held out any hope for personal and religious liberty.

#### 1. THE BACKGROUND IN EUROPE

The Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation made for a wide distribution of the spirit of liberty and individuals felt free to express their convictions on all subjects. When conservative leaders like Martin Luther tried to confine the newly born spirit of religious freedom to the old rigid forms of the Roman Church, it was discovered that an entirely new form was necessary to give adequate expression to this new life. Dissenting groups found it increasingly difficult to continue in the religious habits and customs of the state churches. While Henry IV in 1598 by the Edict of Nantes did grant nominal tolerance to Protestants in France, there always remained the fear that he might allow the Roman Church to destroy the non-conformists.

In addition to this intolerable religious situation, those who inhabited the lower Rhenish provinces were victims of constant military campaigns. Year after year their lands were plundered by armies which overran their district and used their farms as a battleground. The Thirty Years' War (1618-48), which involved most of the European powers was fought on their soil. This struggle finally was settled by the Peace of Westphalia, which gave religious liberty to Catholics, Lutherans, and Reformed alike. This religious liberty was won at a terrible cost. The population of Germany was reduced from seventeen million to four million inhabitants. Time and again the cities of the Palatinate were captured and recaptured and some of them were burned to the ground.

The Thirty Years' War had brought desolation to the entire Palatinate. The provinces resembled a wilderness and famine added to their plight. Without proper sanitation and with very little nourishing food, starvation faced these people and pestilence broke out among



them. Raided by French and Bavarians and denied the benefits of a harvest the country seemed like a desert. It has been estimated that by 1649 only one-fiftieth of the population of this area remained. From 1673 to 1695 Louis XIV of France raided the country and indiscriminately burned their property. He made the proud boast that "A desert should henceforth be the boundary of France." Heidelberg and Mannheim were burned in 1689 and others including Speyer and Worms met a similar fate.<sup>1</sup>

The Treaty of Westphalia proved to be only a truce, for warfare continued in this already greatly impoverished region. The inhabitants of these Rhenish provinces were encouraged by their princes to remain on their lands and rebuild their homes and till their fields once again, even to the remission of their taxes for several years, and the promises that there would be no further destruction. Such promises proved to be idle and were soon broken. The Edict of Nantes which had brought a limited freedom to the Protestants in France was revoked in 1685 by Louis XIV, no doubt under pressure from Rome. This meant that if one desired to remain loyal to the Protestant faith one must do so at the risk of the confiscation of property and life. To escape persecution about a half million of the best citizens of France found their way into surrounding countries. Louis XIV was humiliated and incensed because the neighboring countries had received so many of his subjects, and sent General Melac into the Rhine provinces to lay waste that beautiful country. Heidelberg was sacked in 1688 and in 1693 fifteen thousand of its inhabitants were put to the sword. Twelve hundred towns and cities were destroyed before Louis XIV was defeated at Blenheim, August 13, 1704, by the English Duke of Marlborough.

By the terms of the Peace of Ryswick, 1697, the Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed faiths were all legally tolerated. This treaty was never kept entirely by the Roman Catholics. Furthermore, in 1701, the War of the Spanish Succession began a twelve years' devastation of the same Palatinate areas. A vivid description of the waste which General Villers of the French Army produced in this area is found in the introduction to a Heidelberg Catechism printed in London in 1709, for the Reformed refugees:

"Villers and his army reduced the Palatinate to a perfect wilderness, not leaving the poor Reformed so much as a house in which to hide their heads, or hardly enough clothing to cover their nakedness."

In the wake of this destruction, the Jesuits went into the area and tried to win back these Germans to the Roman faith. In some of the

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<sup>1</sup> Kapp, Friedrich—*Geschichte der Deutschen Einwanderung nach Amerika*, 1868, pp. 58-77. On this point and also on the German emigration cf. Knittle, Walter Allen—*Early Eighteenth Century Palatinate Emigration*, Philadelphia, 1937, especially pp. 1-31.

Rhenish provinces the Jesuits were even successful in winning back former Roman Catholic princes; in other provinces, princes of the Catholic faith succeeded to the ruling positions. Thus was opened another source of persecution of the native and refugee Protestants. These rulers, moreover, imitated the extravagance of the French court and for a century after 1690, the wretched people were taxed almost to death to support this luxuriousness, extravagance, and licentiousness.

With religious liberty apparently gone beyond the power of recall and with political injustice and constant warfare bringing destruction to their life and property, these inhabitants of southern Germany found their only salvation in an emigration to the new world. Consequently, when an emigration movement began, it rapidly attained such large proportions as to cause much concern at home and in the lands whither they were bound.

That the religious motive prompted many in the great emigration from the Palatinate is vividly described by Professor Seidensticker:

"We know that the religious motives induced the persecuted Puritans and Quakers to forsake their fatherland and seek an asylum in the New World. The same was the case with the first German immigrants. The treaty of peace, made at Westphalia in 1648, at the close of the Thirty Years' War, recognized but three confessions of faith in the German Empire: The Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed. Whosoever was, by conscientious conviction, induced to shape his Christian faith differently, to understand the Bible otherwise, and clothe his worship in other forms, found his life embittered by church and state. The harmless Mennonites seldom found even a precarious toleration, the pious Schwenkfelders had to endure most shameful treatment, even the Pietists, the pious followers of Philip Jacob Spener, who but insisted upon a deeper apprehension and more conscientious practice of religion within the sphere of Lutheranism, were regarded with suspicion by the scholastic church, coarsely villified, and reported to the authorities of the state as being dangerous innovators.<sup>2</sup>

Under these combined influences, many of the finest families of France and southern Germany left their mother countries to seek a new homeland. It seems providential that America should open its doors for colonization at the time when the force of personal religious experience could no longer be confined to old forms of worship or remain peacefully within the confining boundaries of the European countries.

## 2. THE EMIGRATION

The exodus of persecuted Europeans extended from 1683 to the French and Indian War in 1755. During this period there came into

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<sup>2</sup> Seidensticker, Oswald, *Bilder aus der Deutsch-pennsylvanischen Geschichte*, New York, 1886, p. 5.

the colony of Pennsylvania many who desired to escape the miserable conditions of their war ravaged homes in Europe, and to avoid the devastation of war and oppressive taxation, and some sought a more healthful climate. A few groups had come specifically for religious liberty, among whom were the Moravians, Schwenkfelders, Dunkers, Mennonites and the pietistic or evangelical groups.

William Penn himself was to a large degree responsible that these Germans, seeking a peaceful haven for their families, chose his colony. As early as 1676 he had visited Germany to help the oppressed Mennonites and other Anabaptist groups. At Penn's invitation the first colony of German immigrants, the Crefeld Mennonites under the leadership of Dr. Francis Daniel Pastorius, came and in 1683 founded Germantown. These Anabaptists came on the British ship "Concord" which arrived in Philadelphia, October 6, 1683.

"This vessel which brought the advance guard of the first German immigrants to Pennsylvania has remained unhonored and almost unknown, whilst every child can tell of the Mayflower that brought over the Pilgrim Fathers, and which has been glorified in poetry and prose. Perhaps at some future time a similar enthusiasm will spring up among the Germans over the almost forgotten Concord."<sup>3</sup>

The extreme poverty of these people compelled them at first to live in small log cabins in the forest. In ridicule this "Deutschen-Stadt" was sometimes called "Poor-man's-town."

In England, Queen Anne was also sympathetic with these unfortunate continentals and invited them in 1708 to find in England a haven from their stress and persecution.

Queen Anne had been influenced by the Rev. Joshua Kocherthal (d. 1719) of Lindau, who in 1704 had visited England on behalf of his afflicted countrymen. The queen and her officials sympathized with the Germans and encouraged Kocherthal to continue in his efforts. In 1706 he published a pamphlet describing a plan for emigration from their war-ridden land. This publication was widely distributed and had much to do with the large exodus of Germans to England in 1708-09. Multitudes of Palatinates including Kocherthal and his congregation of fifty members promptly accepted the queen's invitation issued in 1708 and twelve thousand of them came to England during the first year, taxing indeed the generosity and hospitality of their hostess. In London these refugees were quartered in warehouses, tents, and other temporary abodes.

The rapidly increasing number of Germans in England presented a serious problem and the government sent large numbers of them to its colonies. The first contingent sailed for New York on April 11, 1708,

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<sup>3</sup> Seidensticker, Oswald, *op. cit.*, p. 23.



under the leadership of Kocherthal, who had secured for them a grant of land on the Hudson. This was really the beginning of the emigration which resulted eventually in the founding of German settlements in New York. He returned the following year and found that during his absence additional thousands of Germans had come to England. With government assistance he organized the largest colony which ever left European shores. Ten ships with about four thousand emigrants sailed for New York on January 20, 1710. Storms, lack of supplies, resulting pestilence and disease made their six months' voyage a dreadful experience, and they lost thereby about one-third of their party. These Germans settled at Schoharie, Newburg, Rhinebeck, and New Palatinate, New York. Traces of their pioneering are still evident in the Hudson Valley as well as in the valley of the Mohawk and Canajoharie where they cut virgin forests and cleared farms for themselves. Among those who came with Kocherthal in 1710 was Jacob Becker of the Reformed faith. He secured a patent in 1737 in what is now Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, and was the father of the Beckers who became prominent Evangelicals at the Mühlbach.

Unfortunately for these new colonists it proved impossible to maintain a harmonious relation with the colonial authorities of New York. In 1723 the proprietaries of New York invalidated the titles of the lands held by these immigrants. These thrifty Germans left their homes on the Hudson in large numbers and moved westward into the Mohawk Valley on lands given them by the Indians. No sooner were they established there than they were again disturbed by the colonial authorities who tried to make them pay for the lands which the Indians had freely given them.

Others of these Germans in the Hudson settlements set out with friendly Indian guides in 1723 and travelled through unbroken forests to the head-waters of the north branch of the Susquehanna. Here they built rafts and travelled down the Susquehanna with their families and goods until they reached the mouth of the Swatara River at the place where Middletown, Pennsylvania, now stands. Travelling up this river they came to a beautiful spot in western Berks County called by the Indians "Tulpehocken." Five years later their fellow-countrymen from the state of New York, under the leadership of John Conrad Weiser, Jr., settled near Womelsdorf, where Weiser built a house on the property on which the state of Pennsylvania has recently established the Conrad Weiser Park. Here Weiser served as an interpreter among the Indians and frequently assisted the colonial authorities in keeping peaceful relations with them.

Correspondence soon brought the news of the ill fate of the New York settlement to those remaining in the homeland who intended to

seek new homes in America. Peter Kalm, the Swedish traveler, wrote:

"The Germans wrote to their relatives and friends in Germany and advised those who intended to emigrate to America, by all means to avoid New York where the authorities had treated them so hatefully." <sup>4</sup>

Between 1727 and 1776 more than thirty thousand heads of German, Swedish, and Dutch families entered the port of Philadelphia.<sup>5</sup>

The Mennonite emigration, which began when the Crefeld Mennonites from the Lower Rhine region settled Germantown in 1683, was entirely distinct from the Palatinate emigration, and continued when the Swiss and Alsatian Mennonites settled in Lancaster County in 1709-10. As early as 1706-07, the Mennonites of the Canton of Bern, Switzerland, had sent their agents to London to make arrangements with William Penn for the settlement of a large number of their people in his province.<sup>6</sup> These envoys continued to Pennsylvania and after considerable exploration, selected a portion of what has become the garden spot of Pennsylvania if indeed not of North America, 10,000 acres on the north side of the Pequea Creek, now in Strasburg township, Lancaster County. The title was perfected October 10, 1710, and the land was divided the following April 27, according to the previous arrangement.<sup>7</sup>

The first group of Dunkers (Dunkards) settled in Germantown in 1719. Ten years later their founder, Alexander Mack, and the remnant of his followers, about thirty families, also came to this settlement. Mack, born in 1679, had organized his first society in 1708. He died in Germantown in 1735.<sup>8</sup> About the same time there was a constant stream of Huguenots coming into the Pennsylvania colony, many penetrating to the western sections before making permanent settlements.

The Schwenkfelders came from Silesia in 1734 and settled largely in Montgomery, Berks, Bucks and Lehigh counties. This small sect were the followers of Caspar Schwenkfeld von Ossig, (b. 1490-d. 1561) who never organized his followers in Europe. Their movement was a typical Reformation movement, with slight variations from the Lutheran faith of the sacraments and the means of grace, but emphatically different in their marked mystical strain. They, too, were a quiet pietistic group who suffered persecution in Silesia so that they decided to cast their lot with the settlers of the new land. Count Zinzendorf had protected them for a while but for conscience's and liberty's sake

<sup>4</sup> Kapp, Friederich, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

<sup>5</sup> Rupp, I. Daniel, "*A Collection of Upwards of 30,000 Names of Germans, Swiss, Dutch, French, and Other Immigrants to Pennsylvania 1727-1776.*" Philadelphia, 1875; also Hinke, William J.—*Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, Norristown, Pa., 1934, 3 vols.

<sup>6</sup> *Colonial Records*, Vol. III, p. 397.

<sup>7</sup> Rupp, I. Daniel, *History of Lancaster County*, Lancaster, 1844, p. 75.

<sup>8</sup> *Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, Vol. XVII, p. 18.

they desired to go to America. Here they formed one of the groups which Jacob Albright contacted in his earliest preaching tours.

In 1742-43 large bodies of Moravians came to Pennsylvania under the leadership of their patron, Count Zinzendorf (b. 1700-d. 1761). They settled at Bethlehem, Nazareth and in Lancaster County, now Lititz. Additional Germans of this and other groups continued to come into the colony of Pennsylvania in such great numbers that Governor Thomas estimated that they formed two-thirds of the population. In 1742 their number was estimated at 100,000 and by 1783 at 280,000.<sup>9</sup>

James Logan, provincial secretary, wrote to the proprietor of the colony in 1717:

"We have of late a great number of Palatinates pouring in upon us without any recommendation or notice, which gives the country some uneasiness, for foreigners do not so well among us as our English people."

Governor Keith appeared before the Colonial Council during this same year to tell of the great number of German immigrants who dispersed themselves immediately after landing in Philadelphia, "Without producing certificates from whence they came, or what they are."

Two years later Jonathan Dickinson wrote: "We are daily expecting ships from London which bring over Palatinates in number six or seven thousand."

The council felt that dangers impended and adopted a measure which provided that on entrance at the port of Philadelphia, all males over 16 must subscribe to an oath or article of allegiance to the English government, and obedience to Colonial authorities. The efforts of the English people to restrict immigration were due largely to the fear of being out-voted. Consequently all immigrants after September, 1727 "were marched in line to the court house, where they laid down their guns, met the Governor, subscribed the oaths, saluted the Governor with three volleys, the same to the Mayor and Sheriff, and so back to the ship."<sup>10</sup>

Before 1776 some thirty or more thousand signatures were entered on the port records which are among the valuable possessions of the State Museum and Library at Harrisburg. These restrictions, however, were unable to stem the tide of immigration for six vessels arrived in Philadelphia in 1727 with three more following in 1728 and three in 1729. The maximum immigration from the Palatinate occurred between 1730-40 when sixty-five ship loads arrived.

By 1730, the region west of the Susquehanna was opened and Germans filled that area which has since become York and Adams Counties.

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<sup>9</sup> Horne, A. R., *History of Lehigh County*, p. 23.

<sup>10</sup> McMinn, Edwin, *Life and Times of Henry Antes*, Moorestown, N. J., 1886.



After the treaty of Fort Stanwix, November 5, 1758, some of these German settlers penetrated this region as far as the Alleghenies and over these mountains so that there were actually German settlements west of the main ridge of the Alleghenies before the Revolutionary War. Thousands of them also settled in the Cumberland Valley, in Maryland, and even as far south as Shenandoah and Rockbridge Counties in Virginia. Here George Washington met them on his surveying expeditions.

"When George Washington and others were surveying lands in that part of Virginia in April, 1748, they were attended by a great company of people, men, women and children, who followed them through the woods. They would never speak English, but when spoken to, would always speak Dutch (German)." <sup>11</sup>

Jacob Albright preached among the grandchildren of these German settlers in Virginia near the close of the century. For half a century more, the preachers of the Evangelical Association carried on the work he had begun there until at the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 it was found necessary to discontinue this work entirely since slavery was specifically forbidden in the rules of the denomination.

### 3. RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS IN PENNSYLVANIA BEFORE 1800

Among the German immigrants that came into Pennsylvania, there were very few clergymen. Before 1740 there was scarcely any religious care given to these fundamentally religious people. This lack of spiritual leadership may help to account for the sudden decline of interest in religious matters on the part of those who had left their homelands seeking religious freedom. It is true that life was exceedingly strenuous. Frontiers had to be braved, virgin forests cut and land cleared to secure shelter and a livelihood for the family.

There was, however, group consciousness and religious solidarity especially among the Anabaptists. This made for a distinct religious culture without a separate leadership, even as much of their religious activity is sponsored now. Somewhat encouraging, too, was the plan to unite all the German Protestants in this land.

The first attempt at a union of the various Protestant faiths of German origin in this country was made by Count Zinzendorf who, although a Lutheran pietist, felt that the German immigrants had sufficient in common in addition to their nationality to make possible a union of their religious efforts. This attempt at a union of the German Christians was made in 1736-40. His plan was to get the pious mystics of the various groups to unite in what he wanted to call "The Congrega-

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<sup>11</sup> Sparks, Jared, *Writings of George Washington with a Life of the Author*, Boston, 1855. Vol. II, p. 418.

tion of God in the Spirit." Had he succeeded, his church would have resembled the Moravian church in Europe with *ecclesiola in ecclesia* or small churches within the church. Zinzendorf was the patron of the Moravian movement and made several visits to America in the interest of the missionary work of this denomination. However, he always remained a Lutheran minister in good and regular standing and on one occasion he actually served a Lutheran congregation in Philadelphia as regular stated supply preacher.<sup>12</sup> Many Lutherans looked upon his work with little favor and even today Zinzendorf's contribution is not very highly regarded by Lutheran historians.

The Lutheran Swedes had churches on the Delaware even before Penn came to his colony. Among the first Lutheran pastors were the brothers, Daniel and Justus Falckner, who were compelled to leave their Erfurt Pietistic group because of suppression. They left Pennsylvania and did most of their work in New Jersey and New York. The Rev. Anthony Jacob Henkel came to the Pennsylvania Colony in 1717. He had been a Pietistic court preacher of one of the lesser German rulers and had been ordered out of the realm for denouncing the immorality of the court. He brought his large family and located at New Hanover, near Pottstown, Pennsylvania, in the vicinity where the Albrechts settled shortly afterward. Here he was instrumental in founding the first Lutheran churches, and among them the one in Tulpehocken in 1723, just a few miles from the spot where the Evangelical Church was born.

Zinzendorf met with a degree of success in his attempts to unite the German religious groups in America. Some pious clergymen of the Reformed church including John Bachtel of Germantown, a few Lutheran pastors, and such laymen as Henry Antes and John A. Gruber, and some Schwenckfelders and Mennonites, united with the group. Their work was progressing it would appear and a number of real spirited meetings had been held when the Rev. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg of the Lutheran church and the Rev. Michael Schlatter of the Reformed group, leaders of their respective denominations, saw the end from the beginning and perceived that it would mean a loss of their identity as denominations. Hence they vigorously opposed the movement; Zinzendorf's following from these bodies was lost and the whole movement failed. The Moravians bore the stigma of radicalism for many years because Zinzendorf had been connected with their church.

It is quite evident that pietism was growing less and less popular with the authorities and religious leaders in Germany and Switzerland. A majority of the comparatively few clergymen who came to Pennsylvania in this great German Exodus were those with definite pietistic convictions. So, too, the first Reformed clergyman in Pennsylvania who came

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<sup>12</sup> Thompson, C. L., *Religious Foundations of America*, New York, 1917, p. 264.

in 1710, the Rev. Samuel Gulden of Switzerland, was a distinct pietist. He had been pastor of several churches near Bern and continued his emphasis on personal righteousness, urging prayer meetings and warmth of emotional experience. An emotional revival broke out in his parish and he was suspended for creating "disorders." In this country Gulden did very little active church work and for many years the German Reformed group struggled without any but a lay leadership. They were widely scattered over the state.

In the year 1746 the Rev. Michael Schlatter (b. 1716-d. 1790) came from the mother Reformed Church in Switzerland to see what could be done for the widely scattered adherents of this faith in the colony of Pennsylvania. A year later he organized the first synod with thirty-one delegates, only four of whom were ministers. He found 30,000 Europeans of the Reformed faith in Pennsylvania among whom he was able to establish sixteen parishes by 1752 and a number of schools soon afterward. The people, however, were so poor that they could not keep up their schools, and no one would venture into the teaching profession because there was not even a living guaranteed. He wrote,

"It would break the heart of a true Christian if he could hear the pitiful lamentations and see the flowing tears of such as deplore this condition and lament the fact that they had no food for their souls. Very few of them possess Bibles. And those who besides this hear no preaching and, of course, become lukewarm, careless and hardened, are greatly to be pitied. But most of all are the tender children to be commiserated who without religious instruction grow up for perdition and become a prey to Satan and his seducing apostles."<sup>13</sup>

After he had done this constructive work among the Pennsylvania Germans of his faith, Schlatter became unpopular with his associates, with his congregation in Philadelphia, and the Reformed (Synod) Coetus primarily because of his sponsorship of public education. He, therefore, resigned his pastorate and took a chaplaincy in the army.<sup>14</sup>

The Rev. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, (b. 1711-d. 1787) came to Pennsylvania in 1742 as the agent of the European Lutherans and sought to reunite the Lutherans here in their allegiance to their mother church, in which enormous task he succeeded only in a small measure. Twelve years later with his helpers, the Rev. Peter Brunnholz and the Rev. John F. Handschuh, he prepared a message to the authorities of his church at Halle who had sent him to do this work in America. They wrote:

"Among the many thousands of colonists that came into this country during these years, there are many imprudent, perverted and restless

<sup>13</sup> Schlatter, Michael, *Briefe*, quoted in YH(1), p. 20.

<sup>14</sup> Seidensticker, Oswald, *op. cit.*, p. 135.



spirits, persons who in Europe would not submit to God, not to the spiritual and civil authorities; men, who could not live peaceably with their neighbors; people, who led an idle and intemperate life, and in this country seek to make their living and obtain influence by cunning and trickery. This class of people have scarcely set their foot upon this goodly land when they at once set themselves to disregard all order and forthwith use this blessed liberty as a cloak for their iniquity and licentiousness. They mingle with those already here, who are enemies to that which is good and proper; they vilify and defame regular teachers, worship, and good arrangements; call these popery, a heavy yoke, and an intolerable burden, and strive to turn the rabble into factions against us, and increase our distress, of which we would cite a number of examples. Such wicked ringleaders destroy the outward order and security which we have established, and turn things into confusion.

"To this must be added the misfortune that when the 'Newlanders,' or rather 'soul-sellers,' as they are here called, annually in autumn bring many thousands of Germans into this country, there also come along with them some so-called preachers whom they have picked up, such as have been either deposed from office in Germany, or committed some villainy, or have never been in office, or have been only riotous students. Now when these outlaws arrive, some disorderly Lutherans purchase them by paying their fare. For this consideration they then must act for some time as ministers of the Gospel and administer the sacraments, whether they have been ordained to the holy office or not. Afterwards they are dismissed and new ones are bought. These vagabonds then perambulate through the country and seek their bread, and in order to accomplish their object the more easily, they join themselves to those restless spirits aforementioned, and sneak about in the congregations of the regular ministers and stir up the members against the preachers; they unite in defaming that of which they know nothing, but call themselves the genuine Evangelical preachers, and their followers the only orthodox Lutherans.

"In many places we not only lack houses in which the Word could be preached and the sacraments administered without disturbance by the noise of sheep, swine, cows, horses and other irrational creatures in the stalls attached to barns, but we lack still more any sort of buildings in which to conduct schools for poor children. The children roam about like stray lambs, and the numerous young people are being neglected in many places."<sup>15</sup>

The Lutheran and the Reformed followers were especially without religious guidance. It is true that there were thousands of German adventurers and exploiters who had come into this country during this large immigration and these were entirely irreligious. But of the

<sup>15</sup> *Hallische Nachrichten Von den vereinigten deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherisch Gemeinden in Nord Amerika obsonderlich in Pennsylvanien*, Halle, 1787, pp. 682-4.

churchly groups it would appear that the Lutheran and Reformed bodies had least attention given them and had the least group consciousness and solidarity.

Not all the blame for the dearth of religious interest before the Revolution may be rightfully attributed to the scarcity of good ministers. Pastor Helmuth of the Lutheran Church in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, lived in a community where religious leadership was as adequate as in any section of the country. Yet he was much displeased with the spirit of his members. On April 23, 1771, he reported that a few souls had been awakened by the grace of God, but he writes:

"But how small is this number in comparison with the great mass! True conversion is to the majority such an unknown and strange thing that when Jesus calls, stirs up and awakens, they will not admit, at least not from the heart, that it is He, but, on the contrary, declare it to be imagination, morbid fancy, yea even the work of the devil."<sup>16</sup>

Helmuth wrote again on October 28, 1772:

"Iniquity reveals itself among old and young only too plainly. What is most deplorable in this matter is the fact that such wretched people notwithstanding their levity call themselves, even *Lutheran Christians*. They even believe that they belong to the best class of Christians. That such subjects yet boast the name of Christian is only possible because church discipline is being so utterly neglected. . . ."<sup>17</sup>

That the religious condition of these Germans grieved the hearts of their leaders severely one may see in Dr. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg's lamentation:

"The spiritual condition of our people is so miserable that we must shed tears over it. The young people grow up without the knowledge of religion and sink rapidly into heathenism."<sup>18</sup>

The Mennonites, Schwenkfelders, Dunkers, and Amish preserved their group identity by their peculiar customs and especially by permitting marriage only within their groups. The Quakers had their peculiarity of garb, language, and other customs, all of which served to bind them together. The nature of their worship made professional leadership unnecessary. They, too, endeavored to prevent "marrying out of meeting." The Moravians were very careful in their settlements to preserve their close supervision which had always characterized their church. And of course the Catholic Church carefully organized their work and constantly kept their followers under the surveillance of the priests.

<sup>16</sup> *Hallische Nachrichten*, *op. cit.*, p. 1336.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1344-5.

<sup>18</sup> Mann, W. J., *Life and Times of Muhlenberg*, Philadelphia, 1888, p. 68.

A little later we shall see that most of the adherents of the new religious groups which developed in Pennsylvania in the early eighteenth century were persons who had been formerly in the Lutheran and Reformed churches, but who were not being cared for spiritually, since they had few pastors and little religious guidance. Certainly they had no pietistic instructions. Almost a score of years after Muhlenberg came to help the Lutherans in this country, the situation had changed very little. The study of Dr. William Smith, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, showed the Lutheran membership in 1759 to be about 35,000 and the Reformed about 30,000 in this state. Indeed there were now still more Germans but the ratio of pastors was as small as ever.

The Revolutionary War, like every similar crisis, increased the difficulty of maintaining the standard of moral and spiritual culture. Many were caught in the grip of lower standards of living. Drunkenness and immorality of every sort broke down the lives of many of these once religious people.

Strong drink was regarded as absolutely necessary for the soldiers and it was with good intention that the government furnished alcoholic drinks freely to the soldiers. Upon their return these men continued their drinking habit, and the sale of alcoholic beverages increased rapidly. By 1792 there were 2,579 distilleries producing whiskey for the small population. Formal occasions demanded the serving of liquor. Farmers had the idea that severe strains like the harvest season simply could not be endured without their "dram" at frequent intervals. This expression of "personal liberty" was soon extended to include licentiousness in its worst form. New York State actually had a society which was formed to exterminate Christianity and to practise without restraint all lusts of the flesh. Yale had its atheistic societies by 1795. Paine's "Age of Reason" became immensely popular. That even the most sacred institution, the home, had suffered severely in the collapse after the Revolutionary War is shown by the advertisement for 123 run-away wives in one month. These figures include only about 5% of the newspapers of the country.<sup>19</sup>

The news of the conflict at Lexington spread throughout the country in a short time. Practically everybody of sufficient bodily vigor was soon arming himself for war. Those who were not accepted when they offered themselves for military service were restless. The Germans who constituted the greater portion of the population of Pennsylvania were all on the side of liberty, and whole battalions of them went to war. Only those who held religious views opposed to war remained at

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<sup>19</sup> Dorchester, Daniel, *Christianity in the United States*, New York, 1888, p. 342.



home but these furnished valuable aid in sending munitions, clothing and food for they were desperately concerned about their freedom. Among these sects, the members of which did not enter the War of the Revolution, were the Quakers, Mennonites, Dunkers, and the Amish.

The seven years of the war left the religious life of these people still more impaired. Many pastors had fled. Churches had been appropriated as hospitals and even as stables for cavalry horses. Especially unfortunate was the lowering of moral standards due to the breaking up of families and the loss of that natural restraint on conduct which living in the family group maintains. The demoralizing effects consequent upon such dislocation of social units soon manifested themselves everywhere and for many years there seemed to be little moral restraint of any sort.

"The withdrawal of so many men of all ages from the quiet and conservative pursuits of industry to military life, away from the restraints of the sabbath and the sanctuary and in intimate association with unprincipled and skeptical men of foreign lands, engendered in many minds, hitherto virtuous, laxity, unrest, and moral recklessness. In the churches there was much complaint of general lukewarmness and grievous apostasies." <sup>20</sup>

The twenty years after the Revolutionary War covered the period of lowest morality in American history. The Presbyterian Synod of Philadelphia and New York in its report on the state of the church in 1788-9 used such phrases as "the lamentable decay of vital piety," "the gross immoralities increasing to an awful degree," and "great and increasing decay of vital piety, the degeneracy of manners, the want of public spirit, and the prevalence of vice and immorality throughout the land." Consequently it was a very long time until any kind of high Christian ideals became actualized in the lives of succeeding generations in social concern and helpfulness.

"The second and third generations did not always share the religious enthusiasm that brought the original settlers to America. Many became identified with the surrounding population, and mixed marriages often told against the increase of the various churches. . . . The great revival movements that brought such increased activity to the various Protestant churches of dissenting origin were for the most part disliked by the German Lutherans. . . . It was impossible for the churches to do their work in the atmosphere created by the revival without being in some way influenced, either by repulsion or attraction. The spiritual relationship between German Pietism and the religious life resulting from the Anglo-American Great Awakening was best brought out in the works of redemptive social helpfulness. . . ." <sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 339f.

<sup>21</sup> Hall, Thomas C., *The Religious Background of American Culture*, Boston, 1930, p. 277.

While these discouraging conditions were very trying to those who had come to Pennsylvania for the sake of religious freedom, they did not give up in despair. Although the Great Awakening was largely an English movement, there were a few evangelists who were about to give themselves exclusively to preaching among the Germans and win literally thousands to the Christian way of life. Another helpful and constructive influence was the radiation of a fervent religious spirit from the small pietistic groups.

The War of the Revolution brought about 30,000 Hessians to America as mercenary soldiers of the British. These had been literally sold by their monarch and were not at all desirous of fighting. The British, it is said, succeeded in making them fight when they told of the harsh treatment which the Americans gave their prisoners. However, when many of the Hessians were actually captured by Washington at Trenton they discovered that the Americans at Reading, Allentown, Ephrata and Lancaster were very kind to them. England found it impossible to redeem many of these Hessian prisoners because these mercenaries preferred to stay in the new land with its opportunities.

Among those Hessians who settled in Lancaster County was Henry Seybert, father of John Seybert who was to make such a great contribution to the expansion of the Evangelical Church in the next generation. When Henry Seybert refused redemption by the British he was thrown into prison in Lancaster. A Mr. Schaffner paid \$100 for his release and in turn Seybert worked for him as a tailor for three years. Finally he settled near Manheim where John was born.

#### 4. RELIGION AMONG THESE GERMANS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

At the close of the Revolution, these Pennsylvania Germans like most of their contemporaries, were poor, not only religiously but financially as well. The paper money, continental money, was worthless. Gold and silver were scarce. There were a few poor private schools, but no public schools. No canals, railroads or telegraph systems had been established. Mail service was poor. The first turnpike in the country was completed only as late as 1794, between Philadelphia and Lancaster. Farming implements were crude and travel and visiting were very unusual. Those who migrated beyond the Alleghenies were considered as gone for life and those who went westward beyond the borders of the state were counted as at the ends of the earth. All of these physical limitations and circumscribed conditions of livelihood made for a distinct conservatism in business, social and religious life. Gradually the ill effects of the recent war and the vile influence of irreligious immigrants began to disintegrate what ethical and moral sense there was current among these groups. A vivid picture of these

moral and religious conditions which reached their worst about 1790-1800 is given by the Revs. John Seybert, J. G. Schmucker of the Lutheran Church, and John W. Nevin of the Reformed Church. That the closing years of the eighteenth and the first decades of the nineteenth century had not brought any improvement in religious conditions beyond those described in the preceding periods is shown clearly in these accounts:

"Sunday schools, Bible classes, prayer meetings, weekly lectures, etc., had not yet been introduced. There were no stoves and no lamps in the churches; nightly meetings were regarded as new measures, and as tendencies to fanaticism; though for dancing, playing cards, etc., they were thought to be very appropriate. Conversion was a strange word and revivals were unknown. Methodists, indeed, and they alone, talked about conversion; and some few of them, we presume, knew from personal experience what it meant. The cock-pit, the race course, the long bullet lane, the dog and bear fight, etc., were more numerous attended than the house of God. On the whole, darkness comparatively covered the land and gross darkness the people." <sup>22</sup>

To this description of religious conditions of Hagerstown, Maryland, about 1794, Dr. Kurtz adds this description of a little later period:

"Some thirty-five years ago, when God in his mercy sanctioned our poor labors with a glorious outpouring of his spirit, and for the first time in our ministry granted us a mighty revival, the opposition of the world and the devil was almost unparalleled. A revival in the Lutheran church was a new thing in that day; we had never heard of but one, and that was in Brother Reck's church in Winchester, Virginia. He can testify to the bitterness, malevolence, and awful wickedness which characterized the adversaries of such divine visitations in those days of ignorance, hardness of the heart, and spiritual blindness." <sup>23</sup>

Lutherans were by no means alone in their lamentations over a lack of loyalty to their churches and to religion. Dr. John W. Nevin very vividly describes the low standard which many of his denomination, the German Reformed Church, held for their membership.

"To be confirmed and then to take the sacrament occasionally was counted by the multitude all that was necessary to make one a good Christian, if only a tolerable decency of outward life was maintained besides, without any regard at all to the religion of the heart. True, serious piety was, indeed, often treated with open and marked scorn. The idea of a new birth was treated as a pietistic whimery. Experimental religion, in all its forms was eschewed as a newfangled invention of cunning imposters brought in to turn the heads of the weak,

<sup>22</sup> Dr. Benjamin Kurtz in biography of the Reverend J. G. Schmucker in *Lutheran Observer*, No. 1107.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 1114 (January 21, 1855).



and to lead captive silly women. Prayer meetings were held to be a spiritual abomination. Family worship was a species of saintly affectation, barely tolerable in the case of ministers—but absolutely disgraceful for common Christians. To show an awakened concern on the subject of religion, a disposition to call on God in daily secret prayer was to incur certain reproach. . . .<sup>24</sup>

John Seybert, later Bishop of the Evangelical Church, describes the religious groups of this period, as follows:

"Baptism, confirmation, with an occasional reception of the Lord's Supper, constituted the essentials of their religion. The preachers themselves with but few exceptions, were wicked and hostile toward converted people. The Mennonites and Dunkers in general had a more pious exterior, in reality they, nevertheless, were enemies to true experimental religion, which manifested itself among them and also among the Schwenckfelders, when persons were converted to God. . . . The Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and German Reformed churches had their children baptized in infancy. When they reached the age of 12 to 20 years, they attended catechetical instruction and were afterward confirmed. . . . This usually took place on Easter Sunday, but on Easter Monday these Christians could be seen in the ballroom, at the drinking places, at gambling tables, as also on Christmas, New Year and Pentecost. The majority of these pretended Christians, thus manufactured, were a rough and wicked set."<sup>25</sup>

The Rev. J. L. Reber of the German Reformed church in his attack on secretarianism discusses the work of Albright and those who were striving to accomplish a similar moral and religious revival and then says:

"When these men arose, the church presented a gloomy aspect. The ways of Zion were desolate, and the church lay in a sleep of sin, almost lifeless, and for the most part godless."<sup>26</sup>

The cycle of history had brought religious interest to a low ebb at the close of the eighteenth century. When formalism chilled religious fervor and when there was little if any connection between religious profession and life, it was time that someone should call men to repentance for their sins and offer a more adequate way for making religion a practical experience in living. Under similar conditions the Reformers arose to rejuvenate the Christian religion which was dying in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In a somewhat similar way, on a somewhat smaller scale, we shall see that men like Asbury, Otterbein, Boehm and Albright called the attention of their contemporaries to the

<sup>24</sup> Twenty-eighth lecture on the Heidelberg Catechism, 1842.

<sup>25</sup> Seybert, John, quoted in *YH*(1), p. 32f.

<sup>26</sup> *Ein ernsthaftes Wort über den Sektengeist und das Sektenwesen*, Chambersburg, Pa., 1850.

true nature of religion, its very close and practical relation with all aspects of living, and in half a century won thousands to a religious experience which was intellectually valid, richly colored with emotional appeal, and morally controlling.

### 5. THE PENNSYLVANIA GERMANS, THEIR LANGUAGE AND CUSTOMS

The Germans soon developed a consciousness that they were really Americans and after a few generations came to use a peculiar dialect, a mixture and blending of the German with the English languages known as Pennsylvania German. While it was a very expressive language, it soon became evident that many of the children could not read or understand well either the German or the English in their pure forms. The lack of a literature in this language is partly to blame for the uncultured backgrounds of many who were to be reared in this heritage.

This composite language resembled most closely the language of the southern regions of Germany and especially the Palatinate, commonly known as the "Pfalz" German. They continued its use even though they gradually came into contact with settlers of other countries, especially the English. Generation after generation the language became more corrupt. When a limited German vocabulary did not fully express a thought one would inject an English word or phrase until a new language, or better a new dialect, became current in the early nineteenth century. It came to be known as the Pennsylvania German, commonly but incorrectly called "Pennsylvania Dutch." There had also been a blending of their language with that of the Mohawk Indians while the Germans lived in New York, and this became known as Mohawk-German, which was much less common.<sup>27</sup> An early mission of the Evangelical Church was established among these Mohawk Germans in 1839.

While the early fathers of the Evangelical Church were known as Pennsylvania Germans, they did speak and write pure German. Convincing evidence of this is to be found in their extant writings, as for example the journal of Albright, the autobiographies of Albright, Miller and Seybert, and sermons by Dreisbach and others. From 1836 *Der Christliche Botschafter* was published in German of a pure type. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, however, especially in eastern Pennsylvania, a very corrupt German came into use and here Evangelicals, like those of all other faiths, spoke this composite language. The Pennsylvania German Society has preserved in their archives the evidence of these contributions of the Germans to American

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<sup>27</sup> Kapp, Frederick, *Geschichte der Deutschen in Staat New York*, p. 138ff.

culture, and has also been instrumental in publishing a *Dictionary of Non-English Words of the Pennsylvania German Dialect*, compiled by Marcus B. Lambert in 1919, and a volume on *Fraktur-Schriften*, by Henry S. Borneman in 1938. The publications of the Pennsylvania German Folk Lore Society form another source of very interesting information regarding these people from whom many of the early Evangelical families were descendants. These volumes have appeared annually since 1936.

These Pennsylvania Germans came to count themselves so characteristically American that when a family arrived from the homeland they were counted as foreigners and called "German." Hessians were looked upon with even more distinction and perhaps hatred because Hessians had fought against the colonies.

With all of their cultural weaknesses, these Pennsylvania Germans were at heart religious. Superstition was current among them. Even to this day their descendants repaint those peculiar star-like designs on their barns without recognizing them as designs which their superstitious forefathers painted so that their cattle would be immune from disease and their crops escape blight. Fundamentally these Pennsylvanians were thrifty, honest and very frank. They loved their homes and families and travelled very little. One group of Amish to this day conducts its services of worship only in homes. While they were thrifty these people were concerned about the unfortunate ones in their neighborhood. When sickness, death, or losses by fire or accident occurred, everyone helped, and there was no thought of remuneration. A splendid spirit of fellowship, still current in some remote sections, was created when the farmers of a community worked together on one farm until a crop was harvested. Thereupon they all would work on the next farm and so on until each man's work was done. There was no actual exchange of cash. It is very unfortunate that these home-loving and fundamentally religious people had so little religious leadership and so little cultural material available for them. There was little religious literature save that published for the Mennonite groups and there were only a few secular papers published in German.

Perhaps the most prolific publishers of German literature in colonial America were Christopher Saur and his son who continued the publishing business throughout the Revolutionary period. The elder Saur printed the first American Bible in a European language in Philadelphia in 1743. This family also printed a newspaper, catechisms, and many other religious and secular items which were very widely circulated among the German speaking peoples of the eighteenth century.

At times these Germans openly opposed the establishing of free schools in Pennsylvania. This must not be attributed to their lack of interest in culture, but rather to the fact that they had previously estab-



lished their own parish schools in connection with their churches and preferred to have their children educated there. These privileges did not extend to the rural areas to any large degree.

Despite their lack of culture and religious nurture these less tutored Pennsylvania Germans had some very excellent characteristics. They were always very frank, sometimes even to the point of rudeness. Like those to whom they preached, the Evangelists among the Pennsylvania Germans hated sham and pretense and consequently frequently shocked some of their hearers who had not caught the wholesomeness of the spirit of this group. Honesty was a cardinal virtue even with the irreligious. A promise was as sacred as a signed contract, and rarely were debts incurred which were not paid. Even though many of these people were crude in their ways of living, and perhaps vulgar in some of the forms of their expression and life, they were by no means atheists. Apparently a goodly portion of these underprivileged people were religious at heart but failed miserably in understanding the meaning of true religion.

## CHAPTER II

### JACOB ALBRIGHT—THE FOUNDER

#### 6. THE ALBRECHT FAMILY

Jacob Albright<sup>1</sup> was born May 1, 1759, at Fox Mountain, about three miles northwest of Pottstown, Pennsylvania. His parents, Johannes and Anna Albrecht, were among the immigrants from the Palatinate who landed in Philadelphia on September 19, 1732, having sailed from Rotterdam, via Deal, on the ship *Johnson*, of the Holland-American Line.

A voyage across the Atlantic in those days was not a pleasure to which one could look forward with keen anticipation. A very vivid description of a journey from Rotterdam to Philadelphia is preserved in the Pennsylvania German Society papers, 1909. The letter was written to someone in the homeland in 1728 just a few years before the Albrechts came to America. It was written by a schoolmaster or a licentiate in theology as the religious inferences would indicate. He writes:

"Concerning the other inconveniences of this journey, they consisted chiefly from the fact that the ship was packed too full.

"The ship's food consisted of horrible salted corned meat and pork, peas, barley, groats, and codfish. The drink was a stinking water, in which all food was cooked.

"My greatest annoyance during the whole voyage were the lice, from which none aboard were free, not even the captain, and I observed that the oftener one put on a clean shirt, the more one was plagued with this pest.

"If I were still in Europe I would never undertake this journey, even if there should be here a veritable or in fact a terrestrial Paradise. . . .

"I would not advise any person to come to this country except—that they were poor and industrious persons, whose life in Europe had become unbearable, and were willing to risk the voyage as a matter of life and death.

"O these Liars! who in their well written and printed missives send us such glowing accounts about the climate of this country and other things all described so beautiful and paradisaical, which deceived so many hundred people—even me—I would not like to share their just reward.

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<sup>1</sup> Hereafter we shall refer to the founder as Jacob Albright. During his life the family always used the name Albrecht, as is indicated by his only extant signatures. Soon after his death his descendants decided to anglicize Albrecht to Albright.

"If I but had wings to fly, I would soon hie myself from hence to Europe, but I dread the tempestuous ocean and the pirates, dangers to which one is always exposed.

"O what a great hazard it is to undertake this journey, . . . Who-soever is well off in Europe better remain there. Here is misery and distress, same as everywhere and for certain persons and conditions incomparably more than in Europe."

After taking the oaths of the port denying any further allegiance to any foreign political or religious power, the Albrechts with many others moved northward along the Schuylkill river, finally settling near Pottstown. Their home was then in Douglas township, Philadelphia County. This portion of Philadelphia County was subdivided to become Douglas Township, Montgomery County, on September 10, 1784.<sup>2</sup>

There was also a Douglas Township in Berks County which adjoins the Douglas Township in what is now Montgomery County and therefore it has been incorrectly inferred that the Albrecht homestead was in Berks County.<sup>3</sup> One can clearly see into Berks County from the location of Albright's old home.

The signatures of the immigrants to the oaths of the port in Philadelphia have left one of the richest sources for genealogical study in the country. The first searchers for information in these records were so unscrupulous that they tore pages and sections of pages from these original documents. The State of Pennsylvania has since preserved the remaining records in the State Library at Harrisburg and has had printed copies made for research purposes appearing as part of the Second Series of the Pennsylvania Archives. On these pages<sup>4</sup> are found the oaths of allegiance to the English government and to the authorities of the colony taken by the immigrants and the names of all males over sixteen years of age who took the oaths. Rupp's "30,000 Namen" preserves the lists which give also the names of immigrant women and children. Rupp's record was compiled from captains' lists written by the captain of each ship on entering the port of Philadelphia.

Among the names of the passengers of the *Johnson* appear<sup>5</sup> not only the names of Johannes and Anna Albrecht above sixteen and fourteen years, respectively, but also among the girls under fourteen the names Matalina, Barbara, and Christiana appear; among the boys under sixteen Jacob and Lodawick. Nothing definite is indicated as to the relationship of these individuals, although they might be presumed to be

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<sup>2</sup> Correspondence with H. H. Shenk, Archivist State Library at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and Genealogical Maps of the Counties, Harrisburg, 1933.

<sup>3</sup> Shirey, J. H., and Wiest, S. L., *Centennial Celebration*, Harrisburg, 1907, p. 48.

<sup>4</sup> Volume 17, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Pennsylvania Archives*, Volume 17, pp. 48-52; cf. also Hinke, W. J., *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 72-4.



of one family, probably some children and others brothers and sisters of Johannes.<sup>6</sup> It is very difficult to reconcile the presence of a Jacob in this family, when it is generally accepted that the founder of the Evangelical Church was born near Pottstown on May 1, 1759. This is made doubly difficult when it is remembered that the founder actually had a brother named Lodawick, or Ludwig who was killed in the Revolutionary War. This problem is best explained by assuming that these boys, Jacob and Lodawick, were brothers of Johannes Albrecht. The recurrence of the names in succeeding generations was quite common; each generation to the present has had a Jacob Albright.

These immigrants very likely had been members of the State Church of their own land for they became members of the Lutheran Church near their new home. Some of the earlier historians have stated positively that the Albrechts joined the Lutheran Church at New Hanover and later at Pottstown. The exact source of this statement is never quoted. The most careful scrutiny of those records reveals no clues to the Albrecht ecclesiastical relationships. The New Hanover records, to be sure, go back only to 1742 and so might not tell the entire story of the family which moved into that vicinity a decade before.

The only possible reference to this family is the confirmation of John, son of Johannes and Anna Albrecht on May 20, 1776, at the age of eighteen.<sup>7</sup> This date corresponds exactly with the age of the founder whose commonly accepted name, however, was Jacob, for at this time he would have been in his eighteenth year. But why the discrepancy in names? Even the fact that there already was a Jacob in the family at the time of their immigration would hardly permit one to say that in the recording of the confirmation a second or other name of the child might have been used to avoid confusion with the older Jacob. Nor can one fairly say that the transcribing at the New Hanover Church was so poorly done that the name might then have been written Jacob and now appears to read Johannes. Then again, the Jacob who came into this country quite likely was a brother of the head of the Albrecht family. In this event, it may well be that the son born May 1, 1759, was named in his honor. It may also be very likely that his complete name was Johannes Jacob Albrecht, but that in the rite of confirmation and in writing the record, only the first name was used. Numerous instances have been known among German families where all the sons bore the same first given name.

There seemed to be no doubt about the age of the founder at his

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<sup>6</sup> "This family of Albrights are descended from three brothers of that name who came from Germany to America in colonial times." Hopley, John E., *History of Crawford County, Ohio*, 1912, p. 1209, in sketch of Joseph Albright, nephew of Rev. Jacob Albright.

<sup>7</sup> New Hanover Lutheran church records in the Boyertown, Pa., bank vault.

death for his wife survived him and by silence gave assent to the inscriptions on his tombstone at Kleinfeltersville, Pennsylvania. Here it is stated that the person who founded the Evangelical Church was named Jacob and that his life span was May 1, 1759, to May 8, 1808. It would appear, therefore, that the generally accepted facts are correct but there are many more problems and difficulties involved than have usually been recognized.

Unfortunately thus far we have been unable to trace the ancestry of Johannes Albrecht in Europe. The authorities of the Holland-American Line have done their best through their genealogical connections to find the vicinity from which these people might have come before sailing from Rotterdam but to no avail. Unfortunately in those days one was not compelled to register his home address when sailing abroad. Neither has careful research on the part of scholars of the Evangelical Church abroad and the Deutsche Auslands Institut as yet borne any fruit.

## 7. ALBRIGHT'S HOME LIFE

Whether or not one can prove religious interest on the part of Jacob Albright's parents by early church records, it is quite certain that the family was distinctly not averse to religion as shown by the confirmation of a son as late as 1776. Indeed, the later experience of Jacob would also lead us to believe that there must have been a rich religious influence in his home background which came back to him very vividly when he found himself in sorrow early in his married life.

The inclination toward Lutheranism did not necessarily indicate that the Albrechts were afflicted with the cold formalism which had paralyzed much of the influence of the State Church in the homeland. We have previously described the pietistic movement of Spener and Franke spreading from the University of Halle and sweeping rapidly over central and southern Germany. Undoubtedly these Germans of the Palatinate had had their hearts warmed to a deep religious interest, especially in relation to a high moral standard of living before they sailed to this land. This is evidenced not only in the family of the Albrechts but also in numerous other groups like the Moravians, the Amish, the Dunkers, the Mennonites, the Seventh Day Baptists, and the United Brethren in Christ. All of these religious groups grow out directly from these Palatinates or were brought with them in nucleus. Beneath the surface there was a splendid mystical pietism which quietly enriched the home lives of many of these early German immigrants. While overtly they remained loyal to their traditional faiths they secretly longed for religious leaders who would stir their souls and rouse them to high moral living.

In one of these pietistic German homes, Jacob Albright was reared. His family, like the others of his generation, was largely a unit unto

itself. With great effort they cultivated their rocky farm, providing for themselves almost all the necessities of life, and having many delightful long hours together. In these hours of fellowship, the strength of character of John and Anna Albrecht was impressed upon their children. The old homestead, a plain substantial two and one-half story stone house, has long since been burned to the ground and a new one built in its place.

When one seeks to understand how Jacob could later come to such a practical and morally controlling religious experience, it is impossible to trace it to any other root than to the excellent, unassuming and unpretentious, yet decidedly effective pietistic way of life constantly illustrated in his home.

Certainly the schools of his day had little to offer. Public schools were unknown. With the work of the farm keeping all hands busy from very early spring until very late fall, it is a question just how much time Jacob actually did spend in school. Quite likely the rudiments of learning were taught the children in the home where they acquired their education largely from the character and fine spirit of their parents. In addition Jacob acquired the ability to read and write German. The school days of that period are vividly described in the lines of the Rev. Henry Harbaugh, in Pennsylvania German dialect:

"Inwennig, um der Offe rum  
Hocke die kleene Tschaps,  
Sie lerne artlich hart, verschteh,  
Und der net wees sei' A B C  
Sei' Ohre Kreige Rapps.

"Die Arme Drep! Dort hocke sie  
In Misserie—juscht denk!  
Es is kee Wunner—nemm mei  
Wort—  
Das se so wenig lerne dort  
Uf selle hoche Benk." <sup>8</sup>

## 8. SERVICE IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

The signing of the oath of allegiance at the Philadelphia port was not a mere gesture on the part of these immigrants. They actually severed all ties with the past. In fact, they were exceedingly happy to leave a land overrun with strife and destruction and were grateful to live in a land where their freedom was unlimited. These adventurers came to love this country as having become their own and when the American colonies revolted against England, many of these German immigrants and their children fought desperately to preserve their peace and happiness. Among these defenders of the colonies was Jacob Albright. He was only in his eighteenth year when the Declaration of Independence was signed, but gave himself in whatever capacity he could be used. Albright served as a member of Captain Jacob Witz's (Wiltz's) Seventh Company, Fourth Battalion, Philadelphia County

<sup>8</sup> Harbaugh, Henry—*Harfe*, Philadelphia, 1870, p. 16.



Militia, which was organized in Pottstown in 1781. Jacob was the drummer of this company and his brother, John, was the fifer.<sup>9</sup> The work of the Pennsylvania militia was very honorable. They participated in the battles of Brandywine and Germantown. Although they were supposed only to serve in defense of their state several Berks County battalions participated in the New Jersey campaign.

From February 20 to April 20 in 1782, Jacob Albright served as a private guarding Hessian prisoners at Reading, Pennsylvania, with Sergeant George Eisenbis' (or Eisenpeis') detachment of Berks County Militia.<sup>10</sup> The only record of a Jacob Albright among the soldiers from Pennsylvania in the Revolutionary War, found in the Adjutant General's Office in the War Department at Washington, indicates service as a private in Selim's Company, Colonel Hazen's Regiment, Continental Troops. This person enlisted October 14, 1782, and was discharged June 19, 1783. Although there is no age or residence given for this Jacob Albright, it is possible in point of time that the founder of the Evangelical Church could have served these eight months in Colonel Hazen's Regiment.

Then the name Jacob Albright appears twice on the roll of Captain Jacob Witz's (Wiltz's) Company, Pottstown, April 17, 1786, being part of the Montgomery County Muster Rolls following the Revolution. It must be remembered that Montgomery County had been formed from Philadelphia County just a short time before, September 10, 1784. The second appearance of the name on this list may be accounted for by the fact that he apparently had an uncle by the name of Jacob who was considerably younger than Johannes Albrecht, who brought him from Germany, or perhaps it may merely be the record of the founder's service before and after enlistment. The name of Jacob Albright also appears on a Depreciation Pay List Berks County War of the Revolution.<sup>11</sup> This is readily accounted for by the fact that he spent sixty days in service with Sergeant George Eisenpeis in the Berks County Militia guarding Hessian soldiers near Reading. That Albright served in the Revolution is also attested by family tradition and by the fact that his grave is decorated annually by patriotic organizations.

The Albright home was very much broken up at the close of the Revolutionary War. The oldest son, Ludwig,<sup>12</sup> was killed in the war. A third son, Daniel, also a tile maker, after serving in the War of 1812, settled at New Lisbond, Columbiana County, near Bucyrus, Ohio. Although he had always opposed the evangelistic work of his brother Jacob, the second son, Daniel, was converted late in life under the

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<sup>9</sup> *Pennsylvania Archives*, Sixth Series, Vol. 1, p. 796. Also *Perkiomen Region, Past and Present*, Vol. 3, p. 68.

<sup>10</sup> *Pennsylvania Archives*, Fifth Series, Vol. 5, p. 292.

<sup>11</sup> *Pennsylvania Archives*, Fifth Series, Vol. 4, p. 254.

<sup>12</sup> Tradition from Jacob's grandsons that he had a brother Ludwig.

influence of the German Methodist missionary, Dr. William Nast, who visited him in 1837.<sup>13</sup> Evidently thirty years before Jacob Albright had discussed religion with his brother Daniel. Jacob, who was much worried about the religious indifference of his brother, wrote in his family Bible,

"Much better never born,  
Than to be forever lost."

George Albright, the fourth son, lived at Middle Creek, now in Snyder County, Pennsylvania, where his brother preached on his tours through this region sometime after 1800. Later George moved into Mifflin County, Pennsylvania. Reuben Yeakel asserts that these sons were all staunch and honest men.<sup>14</sup>

## 9. HIS MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

In 1785, at the age of twenty-six, Jacob Albright married Catharine Cope, and the young couple established their own home. With his wife, Albright travelled about a day's journey from the old homestead near Pottstown, to the northeastern part of Lancaster County where they purchased a very fertile farm of forty-five acres in Earl Township and eighteen acres in Brecknock Township, located along a small stream, adjoining the property known as Fry's Mill, near Hahnstown.<sup>15</sup>

Albright bought his land from a settler by the name of Henry Roth who in turn had received a patent for this land directly from the Penns. The house in which they lived was of stone, a story and a half high. In more recent years the house has had an additional story added to it. Their barn was of stone and wood. One may still see the exact dimensions of the old barn although it has been enlarged by about one-third in its length and capacity. The enlargements to these buildings were very likely made by Jacob Hoffman, a later owner of the property.

On this farm Jacob Albright and his wife lived for twenty-three years, rearing their family within its quiet bounds. From here he began his journeys that led him many miles in his preaching the gospel to his fellow Pennsylvania Germans. It was toward this place, where his family awaited him, that he was returning when he was taken sick and on May 18, 1808, died at Kleinfeltersville, Pennsylvania, just about a day's journey distant.

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<sup>13</sup> Hopley, John E.—*History of Crawford County, Ohio*, 1912, p. 1209, and YH(2), p. 20.

<sup>14</sup> YH(1), p. 37.

<sup>15</sup> The detailed record of Jacob Albright's property is found in *Miscellaneous Book* 1816-22, pp. 29, 36, 50, 66 and 79 in the Register of Wills office in Lancaster, Pa.

There were six children (Yeakel and others say nine), in the Albright family, only three of whom survived their father.

Sarah, the eldest of the three children, was married to Noah Ranck with whom she moved to Tioga County, Pennsylvania. Their son, Jacob, became a minister in the Evangelical Association. Elmina and Clarence Ranck, former foreign missionaries of the Evangelical Church to Japan, are descendants of this branch of the family as are also other members of the church in Iowa and New York.

Jacob, the elder of Albright's sons, died without a family. David, the younger, was married to Mary Raidenbach (Raidabaugh), and reared a family of eleven children, seven boys and four girls. Of these sons only John and Peter, the youngest, left any male grandchildren to bear the family name. John had a son named Daniel, and Daniel a son named Adam, who in turn had a son named James, who was born September 21, 1912. Peter and his wife, Kate (Lausch), had two sons, Jacob and Richard. Jacob had no children. Richard and his wife, Margaret (Wolf) had four sons, Nathan, Raymond, Alton and Harry Charles. Nathan and Harry Charles died in infancy. Dr. Raymond W. Albright, professor in the Evangelical School of Theology, Reading, Pa., and the Rev. Alton P. Albright are ministers in the East Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Church.

All of the children of David Albright and, therefore, the grandchildren of the founder, have died. These sons were Martin, Jacob, John, Reuben, William, Richard and Peter. William, former president of the Akron, Pennsylvania National Bank, and Richard served in the Civil War. Richard was a sergeant, twenty-four years of age, when he gave his life for the Union. He had enrolled September 15, 1862, at Ephrata and was mustered in October 30, 1862. He was a sergeant in Company C, 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry, when he died in Cavalry Corps Hospital, Brandy Station, Virginia. Jacob, David's second son, died at eighteen. John was Jacob's twin brother. Reuben Albright died April 25, 1932, just after having passed his ninety-seventh birthday on April 15. He was the last of the grandsons of the founder of the Evangelical Church and was in good health until the last months of his life.

Reuben Albright has been of invaluable assistance in determining many of the details about the family history and especially in locating many of the historic spots near the original homestead near Hahnstown. In spite of infirmities during his last years, he was generally very clear in his mind and could direct one to the location of such exceedingly interesting places as the home of Adam Riegel, the home of Isaac Davis (Davies), the site of Albright's tile kiln and the Flickinger Church where Albright preached his first sermons.



Jacob Albright's farm is located in the fertile valley of the Muddy Creek, a small tributary that ultimately flows into the Susquehanna River. It lies about two miles southwest of Reamstown, in the vicinity of Hahnstown. Hinkletown is several miles to the west and Terre Hill lies to the south. The soil is fertile and as there are very few hills on the farm, it is a desirable property. It is in the vicinity of the most fertile and most desirable farms in all of Lancaster County, often regarded as the Garden Spot of the United States.

Just across the creek from the Albright homestead is Fry's Mill, and a farm now owned by Jacob Fry. For seven generations this property has been in the Fry family. At Jacob Albright's death his widow, Catharine, and Jacob Sherck were named administrators and settled the estate. Jacob Fry's grandfather administered the estate for the family at Mrs. Albright's death. The legal documents attesting this fact are still in the possession of the Fry family although copies are to be found in Miscellaneous File 1733-1842A, in the Register of Wills office, Lancaster, Pa. The signatures are all missing, for in those days documents were cancelled by cutting out the signatures.

Nearby there is also a farm settled by a man named Mohler, who was the first Dunker to settle in that part of Eastern Pennsylvania. Today there are many sects of Mennonites, Amish and Dunkers in this vicinity, some of them having been founded here. This region might well be called the "Cradle of Religious Sects." The Evangelical Church was founded at Kleinfeltersville. Within a few miles the Seventh Day Baptist group had its beginning. Among the first organized congregations of the Lutheran Church in America were the ones established nearby at Tulpehocken in 1723 and in 1727 in the Zeller Fort. A very early Reformed Church was built a little beyond Tulpehocken, one mile from Mill Creek Center or Muhlbach. The Church of the United Brethren in Christ was founded near Landis Valley, not over fifteen miles distant.

In addition to farming, Jacob Albright manufactured tile for roofing and it is believed by some that he also made bricks. Many old buildings in the vicinity are still covered with substantial tiles that seem to be almost unworn after these many years. Since the oldest residents of the vicinity insist that there was no other tiler within many miles, it is fair to assume that these tiles were made by Albright. Through the careful direction of Reuben Albright, the last surviving grandson of Jacob, it has been possible to locate the exact spot where the old tile plant stood. Here in this southwestern end of the farm, there are still very rich clay deposits and there was, until recently, a huge depression from which tons of clay undoubtedly had been removed. Here, too, each time the soil is plowed anew, hundreds of pieces of broken tile are turned to the surface. On our most recent visits to this farm, we

have found in addition to tiles, broken pieces of brick with a brilliant green glazed surface. A chemist has suggested that such a surface could only be produced by intense heat. Very likely, then, these pieces are portions of the kiln itself in which Jacob Albright burned his tile.

A tile mould purchased by Bishop S. C. Breyfogel from Mr. Fry, a neighbor of Albright's farm, fits exactly over some of the tiles which are preserved. It is fair to believe that both these tiles and their mould date to the time of Albright. Even after he began his preaching, Albright continued his business here. He would mould and prepare the tiles for burning and then would depend on his family to sell his products by the time of his return. After a tour of preaching, he would return to prepare more clay for burning and thus he was able to support his family. Albright established such a splendid reputation that for many miles around he was respected as a business man of the highest integrity and was frequently known as "the honest Tiler." Had he devoted himself to his business exclusively, he might have gathered considerable wealth. With all of these absences from his business, Jacob Albright left an estate of some \$4,000.00, which at the time was considered a respectable heritage.

At Albright's death in 1808, his widow was unable to keep up the farm and the large business and, therefore, sold it to Jacob Hoffman. Hoffman's interest was in farming rather than tiling and so he enlarged the barn and converted the house into a two and a half story building. Mrs. Albright and her children moved into a small log house adjoining the old homestead.

## 10. HIS RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

Jacob Albright's ancestors were Lutherans and it was only natural that he should continue a relationship with the Lutheran Church in his new home. It has been asserted that Catharine, his wife, was originally of the Reformed Church; but there is no documentary evidence to show where her family, the Copes, came from or to what church they belonged. Upon their settling in Lancaster County, the young couple united with the Bergstrasse Lutheran Church near Hinkletown which is located about three miles from their home. Traces of Lutheran influence appear later in the new church which Albright was instrumental in founding.

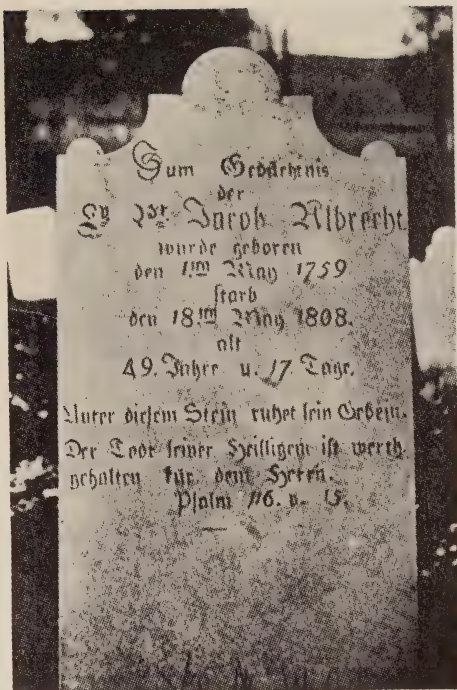
Because of his later evangelical convictions, Albright was dropped from the membership of Bergstrasse Church. In 1876, the Rev. S. S. Henry, then the pastor at Bergstrasse, led his people in a centennial celebration. During this year he prepared a history of the congregation in which is found the following statement:

"During the pastorate of the Rev. Henry Moeller, 1790-1797, we find the name of the notorious Jacob Albright, among the communi-

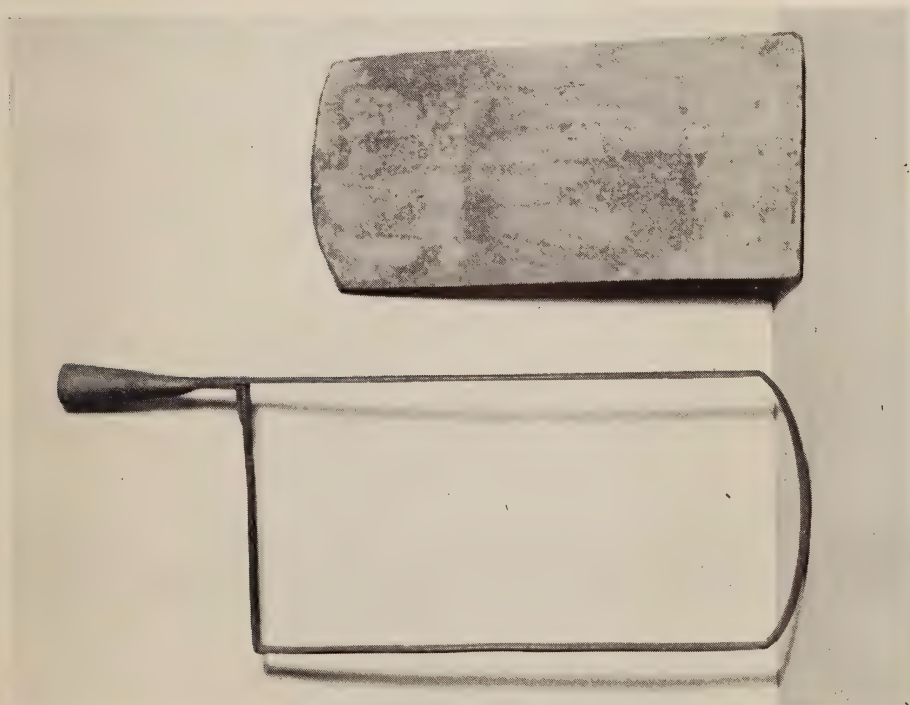




JACOB ALBRIGHT  
*From an early photograph*



JACOB ALBRIGHT'S TOMBSTONE



TILE MANUFACTURED BY JACOB ALBRIGHT  
TILE MOLD USED BY JACOB ALBRIGHT





cant members of this congregation. He afterwards left the Lutheran Church and became a fanatic,—he connected himself with the Methodist Church, in the state of New York, whither, it is reported, he had fled to escape the arm of justice. Afterward he became the organizer of the German Methodists in various parts of Pennsylvania, formerly known by the name of 'The Albrights'—'The Albright People'—but later known by the name of Evangelical Association. He and his wife communed in May, 1791. She is said to have continued her membership with the Lutheran Church unto her end. Her remains rest in peace in our graveyard."

There is no record of an expulsion as such, although Albright is accused of fanaticism and his character slandered, which is only to be expected from those who disapproved of his religious emphasis.

### 11. HIS CHANGE OF RELIGIOUS OUTLOOK

Jacob Albright found no adequate religious experience in his relations with the Lutheran Church of his day. He was an honest business man and, as the world reckons, he was not a sinful character. However, he never seemed to be satisfied with the kind of religious expression which his church afforded. And withal his very sensitive conscience, cultivated in his early home, made him feel that his rather indifferent attitude toward religion was not the proper one. In his autobiography, he described his feeling:

"I walked thoughtlessly in the path of life, rejoiced with those who rejoiced and thought little about the object of human existence, regarded not the duties of mankind, much less of Christians, lived as though the little span of duration would last eternally, and committed many sins for which God threatened severe punishment. In such a condition of heart, most persons seem to be happy, perhaps many also judged so of me, since I seemed to be contented and cheerfulness smiled on my countenance. Yet I was not really happy, and I do not believe that a person in such a condition can ever be entirely happy. After the enjoyment of all the pleasures which only the world can offer us, there remains a void, an uneasiness in the back of the heart, which awakens a painful feeling—this is the mystical voice of conscience which embitters all forbidden pleasures and enjoyments. Real joy, genuine happiness occur only through the consciousness of duties fully performed. Oh! Often I heard the whispering of this mysterious voice and many a time it spoke also distinctly and loud and seemed to accuse me when I was guilty of a sinful act, when I left undone some good which lay in my path or when I was compelled to say to myself that I was disobedient to the rule of virtue and the commandments of my Creator. At first I gave but little heed to this illusion, conscience; but since I still paid attention somewhat to it, it repeated its admonitions constantly and more forcibly and the more attention I paid to it, the louder it spoke in my soul until I finally began to get an insight into

my sinful state and almost seized upon a resolution to improve myself; yet this resolution remained only a plan and never came to realization, because my flesh forcibly opposed it."<sup>16</sup>

Albright lived in a community where evangelical religious experience was frequently stressed. Near his home was the home of Isaac Davis (Davies), a lay preacher of the Methodist Church, and also the home of Adam Riegel, a lay preacher of the United Brethren in Christ. The Reformed evangelists, the Revs. William Otterbein and Anthony Houtz (Aug. 4, 1758-April 2, 1813), had traveled through this region and preached the experience of a personal relationship to God. Otterbein was then pastor of a Reformed congregation in Baltimore and Houtz was in charge of several churches in Dauphin County, one of which was in Harrisburg, then a mere village.<sup>17</sup> On June 27, 1791, Houtz moved to Harrisburg and became the first resident Reformed pastor in the future Capital City of Pennsylvania. It was impossible that Albright could have entirely escaped from the messages or at least the spirit of these men who touched the very life of his community.

Then, too, in 1790, he had the sad and most disturbing experience in the loss of several of his children during an epidemic of dysentery. He interpreted this misfortune as an act of punishment from God and was all the more bewildered. That he and Mrs. Albright had the Rev. Anthony Houtz preach the funeral sermons for their children is another evidence that Albright was more and more favorably impressed with the evangelical type of Christianity in contrast to the formal type of his own denomination. Through the influence of Mr. Houtz, Albright was led to think more seriously than ever upon his unsatisfactory way of life. Strangely enough about this time Albright was almost miraculously saved from death on several occasions and was thereby led to think of his obligation to God. About these experiences, he writes:

"On several occasions I was in great danger of losing my life, but was so suddenly and remarkably rescued, that I was filled with astonishment. Involuntarily I felt strong emotions of gratitude to God for his merciful providence, so that my heart was constrained to praise the Lord. However, as often as I lifted my eyes to heaven, I heard the voice of conscience, saying, 'You are not worthy of salvation; the only offerings which please God are pure hearts.' Oh, this humbled me deeply."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *MLA*, p. 6ff.

<sup>17</sup> Rupp, I. D., *History of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania*, p. 285, and *Lancaster County Historical Society Publication*, Vol. 34, No. 11. The Rev. Anton Hautz was pastor of Muddy Creek (sometimes called Cocalico) charge of the Reformed church, including a congregation of 140 families, near Albright's home from August 7, 1786 to 1790.

<sup>18</sup> *MLA*, p. 8f.



During these days of mental strain and extreme sorrow, Albright found help in the religious instruction received in his youth. While the instruction in religion which he had received during his childhood did not give him a clear understanding, Albright did have a deep reverence for God; and these harrowing experiences led him to think upon the sinfulness of his ways.

"God extended his hand to me also in other ways," he writes. "In early youth I had received instructions in the Christian religion. Then I could not comprehend, and did not experimentally realize the truth, still from that time there remained in me a reverence for God; though dim, yet it extended so far that every place where God was worshipped became sacred to me, no matter in what way it was done. No thought entered my mind, to despise or mock any person engaged in divine worship, regardless of sect. Reverence was the prompting cause that I often visited religious meetings and attentively listened to the admonitions of ministers. By means of the combined operations of the Gospel, I at last learned to know what was required of me in order to fulfill my duties as a man, and as a Christian, and to stand justified before Him who knows the faintest thought of the heart, and before whom the inmost recesses of it are disclosed. Very naturally the comparison between my conduct and those duties was now pressed upon my soul, and just as naturally I finally realized that I was so far estranged from God that I could not say: 'I am an unprofitable servant, I have done that which was my duty to do,' but was compelled to acknowledge that I was a miserable sinner, an enemy and an offender against a righteous God—a righteous Judge, who will reward every good deed, and also punish severely each sinful act; ah, yes, even every sinful thought."<sup>19</sup>

Here there is very clear evidence of the effect of evangelistic preaching on the life of Albright. From a calm and prosperous business man, satisfied with himself, he comes, in the course of a few years, to be a penitent sinner convicted of gross indifference to the things of God. His natural interest in religion which had brought him under the voices of Otterbein, Davis and Houtz, brought him into touch with an entirely new type of religious experience. These evangelists put an emphasis in their gospel preaching which although at times seemed crude, yet was such that it appealed to the emotions as well as the intellects of their hearers. Under the influence of their tremendous appeal, Albright yielded to Christ and was won to a pious Christian life. He simply could not rid himself of that yearning for salvation until he yielded himself to Christ and to an earnest way of Christian living. It was not easy for him to make such an adjustment. The mental anguish which Albright suffered under conviction of sin led

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9 and 10.

him through days of much suffering and uncertainty. He lost confidence in himself and was even on the very verge of desperation.

"I was afraid of myself," he wrote. "The judgments of God were before my mind. My spirit was in such a state of depression, that no appeal to the senses could dispel the gloom. The feeling of my unworthiness increased from day to day, until in my thirty-second year, in the month of July, it reached a degree bordering even on despair. I felt myself so little and unworthy and my sins so great, that I could not conceive how a just God, who judges according to deserts, could possibly do otherwise than hurl me into the abyss of damnation! The anguish of my soul increased every moment so that I was ready to exclaim, 'Ye mountains, fall upon me; and ye hills, cover me.' How deeply I regretted my past life, and how widely different I would have lived could I have lived it over again! I not only realized my great sinfulness, but this knowledge of sin was followed by keen sorrow, whereupon I immediately formed the resolution in the future to forsake my evil ways, and so to order my life, that I could at least quiet my conscience, although I had no hope of pardon for the offences which I had committed against my Creator and Redeemer."<sup>20</sup>

The natural expression of a burdened soul is prayer. In contrition of heart and sincere penitence, Albright prayed for peace with God:

"As my heart realized this keen sense of sorrow, and as this resolution to reform passed before my soul, then I also felt the need of prayer, and of pouring out my heart before God. I felt that I had power to pray ardently, heartily, and with resignation. I fell upon my knees, and tears of bitter sorrow flowed down my cheeks, and a lengthy and fervent prayer ascended to the throne of God for grace and the remission of my sins."<sup>21</sup>

In his perplexity and dire extremity, Albright sought the aid of Adam Riegel, a lay preacher of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, who lived about a half a mile west of Albright's home. Daily he went to Riegel's home for instruction in the Christian faith and the new way of life. Together they spent hours in prayer.

"This persevering and fervent prayer," he writes, "brought me nearer and nearer to my enlightenment. I realized power to consecrate myself to good things, and to submit my will entirely to the will of God. I heard the voice of consolation in my soul; then I learned to understand and was convinced that since God does not desire the destruction of a sinner but that he should turn from his way and live, he would look upon my sincere repentance, penance and contrition of my heart with gracious eyes and that the merit of my Lord and his bitter suffering and death would complete the work.

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10f.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

"Now I constantly made progress, holding on and supplicating the grace of God ardently and asking the assistance of his spirit that he would give me strength to fight against sins and finally to win the victory. With anxiety I watched over each of my actions, over each thought, over each impression which any external thing might make on my heart. Through this continuous struggle I finally was able to separate myself entirely from the way of the flesh and only attended to that which is above. In the place of carnality, came a holy love to God, his Word, and all his true children. Gradually every anguish of heart was removed, and comfort and the blessed peace of God pervaded my soul. God's spirit bore witness with my spirit, that I was a child of God; one joyful experience followed another, and such a heavenly joy pervaded my whole being, as no pen can describe and no mortal can express, in comparison with which the greatest earthly happiness which I previously enjoyed was only wretchedness and illusion. My prayers were no longer mere entreaties but praise and hearty thanksgiving were also brought as an offering, mingled with tears of joy, to the giver of every good gift." <sup>22</sup>

## 12. HIS NEW SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY

This experience gave Albright a new confidence and an entirely new outlook on life. He was interested not only in his own spiritual welfare; he became intensely concerned about the spiritual condition of his neighbors. Once while returning from Riegel's home, he met a Dunker preacher and told him that he must be born again or he would be damned. The preacher complained to Adam Riegel about the blunt statement which Albright had made to him. Riegel simply commented, "There is no other way."

After his thorough conversion experience, life took on color once again and had real meaning for the tile burner. He went about his task more diligently than before and was much more friendly in all his relationships.

"Doing the will of God was now not grievous," he said, "for I hated sin, and served the Lord with much joy, and frequently was greatly blessed while communing with God in prayer."

"After I had experienced the grace of regeneration, I soon recognized the fact that the surest and best way to work out my soul's salvation, and to be ready at all times to fight the good fight of faith was, to be in fellowship with devout Christians, and to take part in bearing the cross, to pray for and with one another, to be vigilant and edify each other by means of an exemplary life in the service of God." <sup>23</sup>

Search as he would, Albright did not find a group of Christians in which there was opportunity to express the vigor and zeal for Christian

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12ff.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13f.



activity, which in his new experience had been born in him, and yet which preserved sufficient ecclesiastical order and dignity to which he had been accustomed and which his nature demanded. He was attracted to a group of evangelists, Otterbein, Boehm, Neidig, Riegel and others, because of their warm evangelistic fervor and with whom he would have united had they been more closely organized. He was particularly friendly with this group because he had been helped to his transforming experience through the efforts of Adam Riegel.

Feeling the need of an active relationship with some church having his point of view, Albright continued to seek some ecclesiastical connection. Finally he joined a Methodist class near his home of which Isaac Davis (Davies) (b. 1754-d. 1843) was the class leader, and through it united with the Methodist Church, whose *Discipline* and regulations seemed to satisfy his nature and meet his experience. Davis must have been influenced a great deal by Albright for he had a son David (b. 1803-d. 1876) whose four sons all later became ministers of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Church. Of his perplexity in this choice, Albright wrote:

"At this time I knew of no association of Christians who seemed to be more zealous and active, and whose *Discipline* and regulations suited me better, than the Methodists. For this reason I united with them and found among them opportunity to receive great blessings and benefit for my soul. As many things in their mode of worship were not yet clear to me, since it was conducted in the English language, with which I was not sufficiently familiar at this time, I earnestly endeavored to become acquainted with their doctrine and *Discipline*, with which I was much pleased. I conformed to its regulations both in my conduct and devotions." <sup>24</sup>

Albright enjoyed his fellowship with the Methodists and became one of them in every way. Time and again he led in the devotional services in Davis's class and soon was given official recognition. His primary concern in the early relationship with the Methodist Church, however, was very personal—he wanted to attain to a very high degree of personal Christian living. He describes his efforts:

"I strove to be temperate, and exercised myself much in fasting and prayer, which I always found to be the best means in the hour of trial, for I had very severe temptations and inward struggles, and when in a strait whether or not to heed the counsel of others, I continued more earnestly and constantly in prayer, which always helped me to overcome my enemies. However, I also found that the encouragement and advice of true, pious and experienced servants of God were a strong support. In this manner I became more mature in the knowledge of God; and by means of my struggles in trials, and the victory which the grace of

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

God afforded me, my faith and determination to do good became firmer; and through persevering and fervent prayer, I realized constantly greater trust.”<sup>25</sup>

Albright constantly gained courage and strength to express himself in private and in public. Frequently he prayed in meeting and soon did some speaking. While he underestimated his own ability, it must have been of fine quality, for he was soon given a written license as an exhorter, that is a lay preacher, in the Methodist Church.<sup>26</sup> His life was now so filled with joy that he delighted to share the richness of his experiences with others.

“In the class and prayer meetings of the Methodists, my joy in God increased daily,” confesses Albright, “and I received power to pray impressively in public to the edification of myself and others. Thus I realized more and more strength, and, occasionally, at the request of my fellow Christians, I delivered an exhortation, which did not remain fruitless. Naturally I had no talents to speak in public, and I frankly confess that I was less qualified in this respect than any other who might have undertaken it; but when I felt myself carried away by the Spirit of God, when prayer brought my soul nearer to my Redeemer, when I was animated with a hatred against sin, when the righteousness of a scrutinizing Judge appeared before me, and I at the same time realized his overwhelming love towards his fallen creatures, I was seized upon by an influence which loosened my tongue, and God’s grace wrought through me the conversion of fallen and unconverted professors of religion, and the edification of true believers.”<sup>27</sup>

It was typical of Albright that he should consider himself unfitted for public speaking. However, others have left sufficient evidence to the contrary. With others, John Ranck drove fifteen miles in the spring of 1805 to hear Albright preach in the old St. Elias Church at Mifflinburg, Pennsylvania. John Walter and George Miller, Albright’s helpers, accompanied him. The church was filled to capacity. Albright preached with great power and tenderness and the people were greatly affected. There was much weeping and many fell on their knees and prayed for salvation. Ranck’s companions were so affected that they fled from the church.<sup>28</sup>

George Miller heard Albright preach for the first time in 1798 in Schuylkill County. He preached from the text, Jer. 21: 8—“Thus saith the Lord: Behold I set before you the way of life and the way of death.” Miller was moved so completely that he asserts he would

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14f.

<sup>26</sup> Simpson, Matthew, *Cyclopedia of Methodism*, Philadelphia, 1881, p. 24, and also Harris, Alexander, *Biographical History of Lancaster County*, Lancaster, 1872, p. 11.

<sup>27</sup> *MLA*, p. 15f.

<sup>28</sup> *SW*, p. 33.

have fallen to the floor if he had not grasped hold of a nearby table. Miller also described a sermon which Albright preached in 1803 at the home of his brother, Solomon Miller, when many fled from the house with fear and trembling. They could not escape the guilt of their sins, however, and sought pardon of God. Those who remained in the house fell on the floor in dire agony, pleading for forgiveness.<sup>29</sup>

Usually before a public address, Albright spent an hour in private prayer and devotion and it has been said by numerous descendants of those who heard Albright that frequently his face literally shone as he appeared to preach the gospel. This is evidence quite to the contrary of Albright's humble estimation of his abilities. But whatever power he had was not merely an unsought heritage. He had very little training save in catechetical instruction in the Lutheran Church and some instruction in the German language. He acquired ability to speak the English only after he became a member of the Methodist class of Isaac Davies. He had no high school, college, or seminary background and even very little of community school training, for public schools did not then exist. But Albright's training was life long and exceedingly intense. He was led to see the supreme value of a personal relationship with God.

In his busy life he took much time to cultivate the pietistic and mystical elements of a vital personal religion. Similar to the Pietists in Germany in the preceding century, Albright emphasized repentance, faith as an attitude of the heart, and regeneration and sanctification as experiential facts. He sought and found strength for this Christian endeavor in his direct relation with God. Through wholesome mystical experience he found direct knowledge of God and spiritual truth and attained through this insight and communion with God the fullest powers of his faith.

Albright could never have been the leader of men and preacher of the gospel which he was, if he had not broken through the externals of religion, penetrating to its inner reality. In hours of sorrow and perplexity he went to God in prayer. When in doubt about the proper procedure in his preaching or in church organization, he prayed fervently. In his work and especially his leadership, he followed the example of his Master and sought support in prayer in the great crises of his life. In all his living he sought oneness with God, his Father.

### 13. ALBRIGHT'S CALL

The genuine Christian experience which changed Albright's life soon began, as is so often the case, to express itself in a concern for the welfare of others. When he once came to realize the peace of soul

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<sup>29</sup> *MLA*, p. 104.



which a harmonious relation with God brings, he felt deep sadness because so many of his neighbors and fellow Pennsylvania Germans knew nothing of the satisfaction which had come to him. Finally he came to the conviction that since there seemed to be no one else, perhaps he was the one through whom these people might be told of the error of their ways and be challenged to the nobler and higher and Christian way of life.

"Thus I spent several years in a state of grace," he writes, "and served God with much joy and gladness and realized his blessings in the bestowment of increased knowledge of him. A burning love to God and all his children, and towards my fellow men generally, pervaded my being. Through this love, which the peace of God shed abroad in my heart, I came to see the great decline of true religion among the Germans in America, and felt their sad condition very keenly. I saw in all men, even in the deeply depraved, the creative hand of the Almighty. I recognized them as my brethren, and heartily desired that they might be as happy as I. In this state of mind, I frequently cast myself upon my knees, and implored God with burning tears, that he might lead my German brethren into a knowledge of the truth, that he would send them true and exemplary teachers, who would preach the gospel in its power, in order to awaken the dead and slumbering religious professors out of their sleep of sin, and bring them again to the true life of godliness, so that they, too, might become partakers of the blessed peace with God and the fellowship of the saints in light. In this way I prayed daily for the welfare of my brethren. And while I thus held intercourse with God, all at once it seemed to become light in my soul; I heard the voice of my heart asking me, 'Was it mere chance that the wretched condition of your brethren affected your heart so much? Was it chance that your heart, yea, even your heart, was so overwhelmed with sympathy for the salvation of your brethren? Is not the hand of him visible here, whose wisdom guides the destiny of individuals, as well as that of nations? What, if his infinite love, which desires to lead each soul into Abraham's bosom, had chosen you, to lead your brethren into the path of life, and to prepare them to share in the mercy of God!' I now began to realize more peace and more assurance. I felt a holy confidence that my prayers were acceptable, and I heard as it were, the voice of God: 'Go, work in my vineyard; proclaim to my people the gospel in its primitive purity, with energy and power, trusting in my fatherly love, that all those who hear and believe shall have part in my grace.' " <sup>80</sup>

Albright was not seeking an escape from his daily toil. He was successful in his business. He knew very well the meagre living which the itinerant evangelists shared. If he hesitated to make the sacrifice,

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<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 16-18.

it was because there were many serious doubts in his mind whether he was worthy of such a high calling.

"Although these things were very clear to my mind, yet nature suggested many doubts. Though this call did not seem to me to be in conflict with God and his Word, yet I argued, I am an uneducated and very ordinary man; how many persons of great gifts and learning there are, who would be much better instruments than I am, persons who possess a better presence, and would make a better impression. During some reflections my courage failed me, and then I prayed earnestly, that God might give this commission to someone else, better qualified and worthier than my incompetent self. To such excuses the voice of my conscience constantly answered, that on my part there must be a confiding obedience without murmuring; God's grace would be sufficient; it would qualify those whom the Lord had chosen as instruments of his all comprehensive love, with power from on high, and great blessing and success unto their efforts. Conscience also glowingly pictured the joy and the reward which were awaiting me, if I would be obedient to the divine call, and on the other hand showed me the injury and ruin that would result to me, if I refused to obey the voice of God, and to submit to his will. In the distance I saw the crown glittering that awaited me if I would, as I was often clearly convinced that I should, follow the call of the Lord to proclaim his Kingdom through the gospel, and to build up the church upon Christ, the rock and cornerstone of all believers, in united fellowship, according to the command of Christ and his apostles."<sup>81</sup>

Albright, however, was not as yet convinced that he should undertake the evangelization of his fellow countrymen. Practical difficulties presented themselves. His family and business needed his full attention. The more serious problem with him, however, was the definiteness of his call to the work. He could not understand why from the simple life such as his, one should be called to such an important task. His reason and feeling appeared to be in conflict and he waited until he was absolutely certain that it was not a mere illusion which bothered him, before he finally gave himself to his great work. This decision was not arrived at as simply as it has been told nor even as easily as his own description narrates it, strenuous as that may seem. It was only after long hours and days of struggle which nearly brought on a nervous collapse that Albright finally decided to give the matter a trial and let his success or failure be the determining factor about his future life work.

"Thus ebb and tide passed through my soul," he writes. "Notwithstanding the full condition of a divine call, my flesh would still raise many objections, so that I often became undecided to obey, and

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17f.

thereby became deeply distressed and humbled. A great weight seemed to rest upon me; I had no enjoyment by day, nor rest by night. I became so low spirited that nothing was able to cheer me—my inward peace fled, and the idea that it would be almost impossible, without the assistance of others, without any ecclesiastical connection, to travel through the country and preach, only increased my anxiety. All the external dangers and difficulties, which, under such circumstances, would thrust themselves in my way, were vividly placed before my imagination, and I trembled in those hours of temptation, notwithstanding that I had God's promises on my side. This was especially the case when I considered that I should be compelled to stand alone, without any support upon which I could rely, knowing God would prove me through trials. However, notwithstanding these doubts, the consciousness was wrought within me by the grace of God, that God was mighty in the weak, that he would ask no more than we were able to perform, that the courage he imparted, and the grace he bestowed would be sufficient to achieve victory and success, if his honor and glory were the end kept in view. I was also conscious of his power, and that all sufficiency came from him, and that he would qualify those who acted in accordance with his pleasure, as I often realized, when I fully submitted myself to his will."

"By contending with these doubts, I became more and more, and finally, fully convinced, that God had called me to the great work of proclaiming his Word and gospel to my erring brethren. Everything that had in the beginning opposed me, all objections, the fear of man, distrust in my own ability, fear of failure in my work, and concern for my steadfastness, became insignificant before the eye of my soul; and, on the other hand, God placed before my mind so many motives, through the impartation of fervent love for my brethren, the confidence in his mighty protection and help, the trust in his blessing, and a spiritual view into the future, revealing the great reward awaiting me for faithfully rendered services, that I could no longer refuse to obey his call. But the execution of this call I deferred from one time to another. I still imagined that I saw a difficulty, and when this was removed, then I persuaded myself of the existence of another. For this indecision the Lord finally chastened me with severe afflictions, a constant cutting pain penetrated every nerve, an almost intolerable torment coursed through the members of my body, my form became emaciated, so that nothing was left of me but a shadow. My muscular system became so weakened that I could not do work of any kind, and, still worse than all bodily suffering, was the terrible feeling which at times overcame my soul, as though I were entirely forsaken of God. What I endured during this sickness in body and in mind is indescribable. Sometimes in the feeling of being forsaken of God, I screamed so terribly that all who saw and heard me, turned away from me with horror."<sup>52</sup>

It would be a mistake to imagine that Albright decided to preach the gospel for the crown of glory which was to be his at the completion of

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 21-23.



his work. It is true that this made his call additionally attractive. He lived in a generation whose reason for being religious was largely other-worldly. The fear of hell and the rewards of heaven were usually employed to lead men to shun sin and choose the religious way of life. But even this other-worldly ideal was not sufficient to cause Albright to act.

#### 14. HE ACCEPTS THE CHALLENGE

The days of indecision were agonizing to his awakened soul. Albright was faced with alternatives to preach or to give all his time to his business, neither of which he seemed able to choose. The nervous strain was so intense that he suffered acutely from physical pains and became emaciated. But finally he succeeded in recovering peace of mind. In place of dying a nervous wreck, at last he made the final great decision. The anguish through which Albright passed made his choice final. It was a case of a great personality accepting a challenge of momentous importance. Jacob Albright proved himself worthy of the call of God to this new service.

Albright describes the experience through which he passed when finally he came to accept the challenge to preach.

"During this chastisement I recognized more than ever before the hand of God, and became most thoroughly convinced that a person cannot do better than to submit himself entirely to the will of his Creator, and to render unhesitating obedience to his call. Miserable as my condition was, God still showed unmerited mercy towards me, by retaining me in a state of grace. I, therefore, continued instant in prayer, humbled myself before the Lord, prayed with hot tears for forgiveness, and solemnly vowed, and firmly resolved that, if restored to health, I would be obedient to God's call, and immediately travel through the country and preach the gospel wherever it would please him to send me, if only his presence would go with me. As soon as this resolution was fixed in my heart, it seemed as if a heavy burden had rolled from my soul. I felt greatly relieved, peace having again taken possession of my breast. After rest had come to my soul, I was also soon relieved from bodily pain, my strength speedily returned, new life pervaded the members of my body, and in a short time I was completely restored."<sup>33</sup>

His entire bodily malady obviously had been caused by a condition of mind or spirit. The moment Albright settled the issue, that moment there was certainty, and he immediately began his rapid physical recovery. And this time there was no mincing of words or delay in plans. Albright kept his promise and was restored to health.

"As soon as I was restored I immediately commenced to make such preparations as I considered necessary and proper. The sufficiency to

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

preach the gospel I sought solely from the Lord, by unceasing prayer and daily searching the Scriptures. I also endeavored to consecrate my body entirely to the service of God, so that no passion, desire or love of ease should obstruct or hinder me in my course; for God showed me plainly the miserable and wretched condition of those who preach the practice of virtue to others, and themselves are castaways. Therefore I fasted for weeks, in the beginning, so that my body was often overheated and inflamed that I was compelled to bathe in cold water, in order to allay the inflammation. I did everything in my power to crucify my affections and lusts, so that the flesh might not reign in me, but the Spirit of Christ. God blessed my efforts so powerfully, that my heart was constantly lifted up to him and received strength to keep myself temperate in all things, to love God supremely, and my neighbor as myself, for Christ quickened my soul with his spirit, that I did not live unto myself, but to the glory of God and for the welfare of fellow-men and neighbors." <sup>34</sup>

After a preparation of life and heart through devotion which had even gone the path of stern asceticism, Albright felt ready for his task. The desperate earnestness and deep sincerity of this man may be observed when one sees him quietly and unostentatiously busying himself with strengthening his mind and soul for his task in the best way he knew. Although he was never under the influence of teachers of asceticism, he found it a natural expression, when he tried to express completely his devotion and zeal for righteousness. One wonders if he obtained additional strength of soul or a more finely integrated personality when he fasted over prolonged periods and weakened himself bodily. Somewhere and somehow, though he himself never explains when and where, Albright received a new power. Close living with God in constant devotion made it possible for him, a business man and a hard worker, to preach the gospel with such sincerity, eloquence and remarkable effectiveness that men renounced their sins and resorted to righteous living. He addressed faithless groups and left them with a creative faith. Ultimately he led many hundreds through prayer to a pietistic and mystical experience like his own, which expressed itself in consistent living. Albright tells that he began his first preaching tour only after receiving the assurance and power from God.

"In possession of such grace, which was a gift of God, equipped with the power of his righteousness and holiness, sealed by his spirit in love, faith, and hope, I began my travels in the year 1796 in the month of October in order to obey the call of God in proclaiming his holy will as revealed in the Gospel. I travelled extensively in Pennsylvania and Virginia, and through the blessing of God I found opportunity to preach in churches, schoolhouses and private houses. Occasionally I

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

also received some support, so that I was enabled to continue my travels; for my labors in the gospel were not without fruit, as many persons were awakened and converted to God.”<sup>35</sup>

Time and again he led men and women into a deeper realization of practical Christian living. At times this work took him into great danger. Without counting the cost to himself, Albright continued to preach in all seasons in the face of all opposition. By exposure to all kinds of weather and through over-exertion he brought himself to an untimely end in 1808. In his last days his chief concern was still for those for whom he lived and served. His last entry in his *Journal*, which is his last testimony, expresses his hope for an immortal life for them and for himself.

“And now I thank God, the Most High,” he wrote, “and to him be eternal praise for his grace, which he has given unto me—that he has kept me steadfast in the faith and pure in life, through trials, persecutions, and sufferings, which have befallen me in this life, permitting me to see that his grace was not bestowed upon me in vain. The seals of my ministry are the converted brothers and sisters, whom I have begotten through the Gospel, and whom I am certain to meet again in heaven if they remain steadfast in faith, love, and hope. And I trust firmly in God, that unto me will be given the inheritance of the saints in light—an incorruptible crown.”<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.



## CHAPTER III

### THE BEGINNING OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

#### 15. EVANGELICAL GROUPS AT THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

As early as the latter half of the eighteenth century, some religious work of a constructive nature was carried on among the Germans of Pennsylvania. In 1752 the Rev. Philip Wilhelm Otterbein, a missionary of the Reformed Holland Synod, arrived from Nassau. He was only twenty-six years of age but already had been deeply influenced by the Pietistic Movement in Germany. His personal mystical experience was enriched in 1754 during the second year of his pastorate in the Reformed Church in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. One of his hearers sought help from Otterbein in his effort to rid himself of sin, and through this experience, Otterbein was led to pray for himself very earnestly. Otterbein says he came to "the peace and joy of a conscious salvation and enlightenment in spiritual things."<sup>1</sup>

In the Reformed Church, he found a few clergymen willing to unite with him in an effort to revive the religious interest of the German people through a program of fearless preaching of repentance, of conversion and of true godliness. Among the clergymen of his own and other denominations who shared his convictions and courage were George Adam Gueting, John G. Phruemer, Anthony Houtz, William Hendel, Samuel Heffelstein, John Neidig, Felix Licht, Christian Newcomer, Benedict Swope, Abraham Troxel, Abraham, John and Christian Hershey, Christopher Grosh, Martin Crider, Frederick Schaffer, Adam Lehman, John Ernst and Christian Crum. Otterbein returned to Germany for a short period and in 1771 came back to assume the pastorate of the Independent Reformed Church in Baltimore. Through his efforts this church later became the nucleus for the work of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

Closely allied with Otterbein in his revival of pietistic religion was the Rev. Martin Boehm of the Mennonite Church. Boehm was born seven miles south of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, November 30, 1725. Without his own consent he had been elected by lot to the ministry of the Mennonite Church. About 1758 he was engaged in plowing a field when he experienced the "witness of the Spirit" which he called a conversion. His home thereupon became a center of evangelistic effort and wherever the opportunity arose he preached the necessity of personal

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<sup>1</sup> Drury, A. W., *History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ*, Dayton, Ohio, 1924, p. 57.

salvation from sin. About 1775, Boehm was expelled from the Mennonite Church because of his evangelistic efforts by which many of his own denomination and others from the Amish and Dunkers had been won to his following.

On Pentecost 1766, while Boehm was preaching in Long's barn near Lancaster, it happened that Otterbein was present and was so much impressed with Boehm's convictions that at the close of the sermon he walked up to the preacher and threw his arms about his neck, saying, "Wir sind Brüder" (We are brethren). They united their efforts and from this meeting, the Church of the United Brethren in Christ dates its beginning. For many years, however, these men were not primarily interested in any particular type of organization, but only in winning their German fellowmen to their pietistic way of life. By 1800 there was a sufficient nucleus for a definite organization among their followers and Otterbein and Boehm were elected to the office of "Aeltesten" (literally "elders," but certainly meaning bishop or superintendent). Now they preached with as much zeal as before but with the added incentive of winning followers for their groups. Boehm died in the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, in 1812, and Otterbein died in Baltimore, Maryland, the following year.

The work of the United Brethren Church was at first specifically among the German people in Pennsylvania and Maryland. Most of their converts in the years before 1800 were from among the unsatisfied members of other denominations who united with this new group because of similar pietistic convictions and mystical experiences.

In many cases, too, there was a strong leaning toward the Methodist Church which functioned almost exclusively among English speaking people. Henry Boehm, a son of Bishop Boehm, became a prominent Methodist clergyman and even Bishop Boehm himself at the close of his life, found consolation in having his name on a Methodist class-book, although he remained until his death a bishop of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. Toward the end of his life he expressed himself as to this Methodist affiliation in the following words:

"Being convinced of the necessity of order and discipline in the church of God, and having no wish to be at the head of a separate body, I advised serious persons to join the Methodists whose doctrine, discipline and zeal suited, as I thought, an unlearned, sincere, and simple-hearted people. Several of the ministers with whom I labored, continued to meet in conference of the German United Brethren, but we felt the difficulties from the want of that which the Methodists possessed. In 1802 I enrolled my name on a Methodist Class-book, and have found great comfort with my brethren."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Miller, Adam, *Origin and Progress of German Missions*, p. 238f., also Drury, A. W., *op. cit.*, p. 209f., and Boehm, Henry, *op. cit.*, p. 377ff.

As early as March, 1810, friendly negotiations in the interest of church union had brought Bishop Newcomer of the United Brethren Church to the Methodist Conference in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Instead of effecting a union it was agreed that members of each church should have free access to the services of the other. Methodist ministers often preached at United Brethren preaching places when none of the United Brethren ministers were scheduled. However, this led to a loss of members on the part of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, and therefore it was discontinued shortly after the death of Bishop Asbury of the Methodist Church in 1816. At some of the preaching places, Evangelical preachers alternated with Methodist and United Brethren preachers.<sup>3</sup>

The work of the United Brethren among the unchurched German people of Pennsylvania was greatly hindered by a lack of definite organization and the inclination toward Methodism, which was distinctly an English movement. Bishop Asbury, who was very close to these leaders of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, wrote:

"Why was not the German Reformation in the Middle Atlantic states, that sprang up with Boehm, Otterbein, and their believers, more perfect? Was money, was labor made a consideration with these primitive men? No; they wanted not the one and heeded not the other. They all had church membership, as Reformed, Lutherans, Moravians, Dunkers, Mennonites, etc. The spiritual men of these societies generally united with the reformers; but they brought along with them their formalities, superstitions and peculiar opinions of religious education. There was no master spirit to rise up, and organize and lead them. . . . But these faithful men of God were not the less zealous in declaring the truth, because they failed to erect a church government. This was wished for by many. . . . Otterbein, one of the wisest and best of men, could only approve; when urged to put himself forward as a leader, his great modesty and diffidence of himself forbade his acceptance of so high a trust."<sup>4</sup>

Methodism itself was doing a splendid piece of evangelistic work among the peoples of Pennsylvania and the other colonies. Methodism came into America in New York City between the years 1760-66 through Barbara Heck, one of Wesley's own converts. While early efforts were entirely confined to English speaking people, we do know that the Methodists had a German translation of their book of *Discipline* (Rules of Faith and Order) for the use of those who read German only. This translation was made by Dr. Ignatz Romer, M.D.,

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<sup>3</sup> Holdcroft, Paul E., *History of the Pennsylvania Conference*, 1938, p. 48f; also Boehm, Henry, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

<sup>4</sup> *Methodist Magazine*, Volume VI, p. 249, and Bangs, Nathan, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 1839, Volume II, p. 365f.



of Middletown, Pennsylvania, under the supervision of the Rev. Henry Boehm and was later used by George Miller in compiling the first *Discipline* of the Evangelical Church.

Bishop Asbury frequently went through the heart of this Pennsylvania German section on his episcopal journeys from New England to the south. A number of times he is known to have visited Bishop Martin Boehm. When Henry, a son of Bishop Boehm, and Jacob Gruber had acquired sufficient proficiency in the use of the English language, they left their denominations and became Methodists because the more thorough organization of the Methodists appealed to them.

The Rev. Benjamin Abbott, a successful evangelist, came from New Jersey about 1780 and led Lancaster County in a religious revival, in which there were many converts. During his stay, he was entertained by Martin Boehm. Abbott spoke in English but others exhorted in German and Lancaster County was moved toward a deeper spiritual life.

The Methodists established several classes in this county, and one of the class leaders, Isaac Davis,<sup>5</sup> was a neighbor of Jacob Albright. There was no intention at this time on the part of the Methodists to do any work in the German language. Already the tide of German immigration had stopped and many of the children of the German speaking people were mastering the English language. Bishop Asbury felt that there was no future for the German language in this country and so refused to sanction any work in it. He had actually consulted Otterbein about a scheme to evangelize the German people, but nothing more came of it than from his later conference with the Rev. John Dreisbach of the Evangelical Church.

"Sunday, June 5th, I called on Mr. Otterbein. We had some free conversation on the necessity of forming a church among the Dutch (Germans), holding conferences, the order of its government, etc." <sup>6</sup>

Futile attempts to unite the work of the United Brethren and the Methodists indicate that Asbury never changed his views in this matter.<sup>7</sup> All of this is rather difficult to understand when one remembers that Methodism was introduced into this country by Mrs. Barbara Heck, a German woman descended from the Palatinates, who had emigrated to Ireland with the many Rhenish emigrants between 1708-10. Before coming to America she was converted under Wesley's preaching.

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<sup>5</sup> Grandfather of the Reverend D. Hambright of the future East Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Association. Four sons of his son, David Davis, became ministers of the Central Pennsylvania Conference. The Evangelical church at Milton, Pa., was founded by Samuel Davis, one of these sons.

<sup>6</sup> *Asbury's Journal*, p. 398.

<sup>7</sup> *Newcomer's Journal*, 1809.

## 16. ALBRIGHT'S EARLY PREACHING

It was a perplexing problem which young Albright had to solve when he came to choose a denomination with which to affiliate himself after the Lutheran forms no longer gave him freedom for expressing his religious experience. His sympathy and intense interest lay with the United Brethren, one of whose ministers, Adam Riegel, had assisted him in finding peace of soul. Albright was very orderly and methodical and sought to unite with a religious body which was carefully organized and had stated rules of discipline in addition to expressing his ideas. He finally decided to cast his lot with the well organized Methodist Church in spite of the fact that the Methodist Church conducted its services almost wholly in English. Very likely Isaac Davis, one of Albright's neighbors, and his class leader, knew German and used it in worship, for German was the only language known by most of the inhabitants of that region. Albright, worked diligently to acquire the use of the English language and actually was granted an exhorter's license in the Methodist Church, when he knew enough English to be able to read their *Discipline*. "I conformed," he says, "to its regulations, both in my conduct and devotions."<sup>8</sup> Albright found a congenial church fellowship among the Methodists, and was faithful in supporting his newly chosen denomination.

As an exhorter Albright led meetings among the Methodists and soon acquired great freedom of expression and a convincing style. With Adam Riegel, a local preacher of the United Brethren Church, he conducted meetings in his own community. Tradition<sup>9</sup> leads one to believe that some of Albright's earliest preaching was done near his own home, in an old church now called "Flickinger's Church," and here under his preaching the children of Adam Riegel were converted. Thus, since the very earliest beginnings of these two denominations which have developed in a parallel fashion until the present, there has been a mutually friendly and helpful relation. Riegel had been instrumental in helping Albright to his satisfactory religious experience and Albright had brought the children of Riegel to their conversion.

It had not been an easy matter for Jacob Albright to leave his successful business and become a preacher among the Pennsylvania Germans. Only after a tremendous struggle, which had nearly cost him his life, was the decision reached to give himself to the work of taking the gospel to these people about whose religious experience he was so deeply concerned.

In his journal, Albright mentions October, 1796, as the time when he set out from his home to do his first missionary preaching. There is no

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<sup>8</sup> *MLA*, p. 14.

<sup>9</sup> From Albright's grandson, Reuben.

specific record of his work during his first year as an evangelist. It is quite possible that these first months were given over to preaching in the counties nearest his home although some think that it was during this year that Albright went into Maryland and Virginia. The eastern counties of Pennsylvania were frequently known as "the dark corners." Lancaster and Reading, probably because of their strong German Lutheran and Reformed population, were cities in which the evangelistic preachers found much difficulty in beginning and establishing their work. The first Methodist class was begun in Lancaster as late as 1807 and in Reading in 1822. This opposition to evangelistic preaching in Reading abated when a young man imitating the Methodists allowed himself to fall to the floor as in ecstasy, and to the consternation of his companions died there.<sup>10</sup>

A year later it is very certain that Albright travelled north from his home across the South Mountain to attend the dedication of a church in Schaefferstown, Lebanon County, on October 8, 1797. References to this event as having occurred in 1796 are erroneous, for Bishop Newcomer of the United Brethren Church has several specific entries in his *Journal* regarding the event. Under the dates October 8, 9, and 10, 1797, Bishop Newcomer mentions sermons preached in connection with this dedication by the Revs. Lochman and Williams of the Lutheran Church, the Revs. Hendel and Rawhouser of the Reformed Church, and Adam Gueting and himself of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.<sup>11</sup>

Apparently this was a union celebration and, as is still the case very frequently on such occasions, the entire community joined in the felicitations of the day. Albright, mingling with the crowd, soon sensed that not all those who had gathered for the occasion would be able to find places in the church and so conducted a service for the over-flow crowd in a neighboring markethouse. There were those present who violently disagreed with the evangelist and some rowdies were about to do him physical harm when a Mr. Maize, a member of the Reformed Church, rescued him and took him to the home of Peter Mohr where he was given shelter. Apparently the fearlessness of this young preacher impressed many, for he was heard there again the following year.

Soon after this discouraging beginning, Albright turned toward his old home near Pottstown, Montgomery County. The next record we have of his work is preserved by Reuben Yeakel<sup>12</sup> who heard Samuel Schultz, then eighty-five years of age, tell that he heard Albright preach in his youth among the Schwenkfelders in that vicinity. Albright appeared at a home in Upper Hanover Township, Montgomery

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<sup>10</sup> Boehm, *op. cit.*, pp. 171 and 108.

<sup>11</sup> *Newcomer's Journal*, p. 32.

<sup>12</sup> *YA*, p. 67.



County, where a funeral of a child was being conducted. Although he was a stranger to the bereaved Schwenkfelder family, to the minister and to the entire assembly, he asked permission of the officiating clergyman, the Rev. George Kriebel, to give an exhortation to the people.

This procedure may seem strange in these days when the last rites are confined to a very brief service. There are still among the Pennsylvania Germans some, however, who spend the entire day in a funeral service at which there are usually several sermons, or at least a few words of exhortation from the various ministers present.

There was much comment among the group concerning the presence of this stranger, when Albright rose to speak after Mr. Kriebel's sermon, and they were still more amazed and profoundly impressed by his message. He had won the hearts of these people by his frankness and earnest appeal for piety. He made an appointment to preach again in the vicinity and was greeted upon his arrival by a very large crowd, which he addressed on the final judgment from *Matthew 25*. Several additional appointments were made in this vicinity before defamations of Albright's character by falsifiers put an end to his preaching in Schwenkfelder meeting houses. Whenever he wished, however, Albright was permitted to preach in the home of David Schultz, better known then as "Berg David", who always remained his friend. For half a century the leaders of the Schwenkfelder Church spoke of the influence of Albright among them and at present there are Evangelical churches in this vicinity.

It was not long until the members and clergy of the more conservative churches openly attacked Albright on almost any score one can imagine, no matter how untrue or unjust. One pastor warned his flock, "Beware of this false prophet who comes in sheep's clothing, but inwardly is a ravenous wolf." Especially was this sort of reception given Albright in his home county.

Very likely the first place at which he preached in his own county was at Millersville, five miles southwest of Lancaster in the home of a widow, Mrs. Anna Thomas, and her son, Christian. Christian Thomas became class-leader of a group of converts and in 1832 a minister of the church. His brother, David Thomas, was licensed as a preacher in 1815 and in 1818 preached John Walter's funeral sermon. John Ripley, another son of Mrs. Thomas by a previous marriage, also became a local preacher in 1851. Even though opposition was constant and discouraging, Albright rejoiced over successes like these.

Later he preached in another section of his county from *Malachi 3:2* and became so vivid in his description of the coming judgment that Leonard Zimmerman declared he thought he saw the Judge coming in

on the clouds of heaven. For a time Zimmerman was struck blind; afterward he was converted and became a useful minister.

The Rev. Charles Bisse, (d. 1848) one of Albright's first adherents states that he was one of four laymen to meet with Albright to hold a meeting on Pentecost. "We had suffered much with Albright but we determined to persevere, prayed, and were blessed."<sup>13</sup> This meeting which had been called by Albright at the beginning of his ministry, probably 1797, was very likely held at the house of Peter Walter, a Revolutionary War veteran, near Quakertown, Bucks County. Walter's home was one of the first regular preaching places.

In 1798 Albright preached in the markethouse at Schaefferstown, Pennsylvania, during the cherry fair, an annual frolic. His enemies assaulted him and almost killed him. Among his hearers on that occasion were George Becker and Jacob Bricker who later became prominent lay leaders in the church. For two weeks, Albright remained at the home of Jacob Zentmoyer, a pious Reformed layman, whose home later became a regular preaching appointment.

In 1805, Albright preached on a Sunday afternoon in a street in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, from the text *Isaiah 58:1*, and rebuked the Lutherans, Reformed, Baptists and Mennonites very severely for their hypocrisy.

"You Lutherans, of course, think you have Luther, and that he was a converted man; that you have the catechism; but your sinful lives prove that you are not Lutherans, for you live contrary to God's word and Luther's teaching. And you, German Reformed—what does it mean to be *Reformed*? It means to be restored, to be converted from sin and the world, to God; but your lives prove that you have turned from God and towards the world. You Dunkards and Mennonites, with your peculiar dress and outward plainness, by which you comfort yourselves, you will be lost without the new birth, notwithstanding you have large farms and earthly possessions. Be not astonished that I said unto you, 'You must be born again,' for these are the words of our Savior and Judge."<sup>14</sup>

One of his auditors that day declared it seemed to him that he saw the earth open and swallow them all up in their wickedness. Peter Walter and his family moved from Quakertown to Jonestown and formed the first class in Lebanon County in 1805. The organized work of the denomination in Lebanon was begun by Philip and John Breitenstein as early as 1816.

Fearlessly Albright cautioned his fellows against sin and urged them

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<sup>13</sup> Manuscript of Rev. Henry Stoetzel read before the General Conference in Allentown, Pa., October 25, 1883. Stoetzel was licensed to preach in 1836 and knew Bisse well.

<sup>14</sup> Spayth quoted in *YA*, p. 71f.

to seek a new birth. With all of his firmness and severity, Albright never became fanatical. He gave credit to the clergy who were trying to preach the gospel and lead their people into righteousness. His flaying attacks were made upon hypocrites and sinners among both clergy and laity.

Because some of the early converts to Christianity through the Evangelical movement were of a highly emotional type, they were subject to much ridicule. Jacob Albright himself always warned against all forms of over-wrought emotionalism among both the clergy and laity. On occasions when they claimed that they were "filled with the Spirit" some of the membership would indulge in loud shouts and general expressions of emotional ecstasy like the clapping of hands and the stamping of feet to rhythm, so typical of the religious revivals which had swept over the American continent. This form of expression was by no means universal among the Evangelicals, however, for there were many quiet mystical persons who disliked this manifestation and who consequently were subjected to the same ridicule as their more emotional companions. Occasionally these Evangelicals were called "Jumper" (i. e., "Springer") or "Straweler."

One of these scoffers, after spending a page and a half in making sport of Albright and his followers and their methods of singing and the clapping of hands, tells of a man who was invited to join this "Springübungen" (Jumpers) and refused, saying, "I feel myself too weak in faith, the love of God might let me fall if I would jump a little bit too high."<sup>15</sup>

From 1796 until 1800, Albright worked largely in Lancaster, Dauphin (then including Lebanon) and Berks Counties. One of the earliest and most fruitful of Albright's fields lay in the mountainous region just north of his birthplace. Near the Colebrookdale Iron Works lived the brothers Abraham and Joseph Buchwalter, and Alexander Jameson, who later became a minister. In all of these homes Albright preached frequently after 1797. To the north in Hereford Township were the homes of Samuel and Abraham Liesser in which also services were conducted from the time of Albright's earliest journeys. A ride of a few hours to the east brought Albright to the Schwenkfelder settlements on the Bucks and Montgomery County line. In this immediate vicinity lay the home of Peter Walter and three miles to the north in Richland Township, Bucks County, lived Charles Biesse. All of these homes lay within a distance of twenty miles.

From these points Albright usually travelled about a day's trip over the Blue Mountains to the home of George Phillips in Hamilton Town-

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<sup>15</sup> Loeber, Franz, *Geschichte und Zustände der Deutschen in Amerika*, Cincinnati, 1847, p. 437.



ship, Monroe County (then Northampton County). Prior to 1800, Albright had established preaching places at the homes of Ludwig Zeiring and Adam Faber in the vicinity of Jonestown, Lebanon County. The first class in this vicinity, however, remained to be formed in 1805 when Peter Walter moved nearby from Bucks County. In Fishing Creek Valley in Dauphin County, conversions under Albright's ministry have been traced as far back as 1801. Among his established preaching places here were the homes of Philip and Benjamin Stroh. As early as 1797 the home of Leonard Zimmerman in Schuylkill County was open to Albright for religious services. Leonard, Jr., became an Evangelical minister in 1811.

A very unusual situation grew out of the regular preaching of Albright at the home of Michael Brobst near Miller's home in Albany Township, Berks County, equalled perhaps only in the Eyer family near New Berlin where the Rev. John Dreisbach, the Rev. Henry Niebel and the Rev. David Shellenberger married daughters of the Eyers. Magdalena and Maria Brobst married George and Solomon Miller and were converted with their husbands under Albright's preaching. Mr. Brobst, formerly a lieutenant in the French and Indian War and a major and lieutenant-colonel of militia in the Revolution, was a wealthy owner of the Union Iron Works and had associated with him his two sons John and Michael, Jr. These sons with their wives were also won to the church at the Easter meeting at the home of Solomon Miller in 1803. As a result of these accessions, a class was formed and George Miller became the leader. Both George and Solomon Miller later became ministers. Colonel Brobst was very much opposed to having a son-in-law in the ministry and, it is reported, tried to kill George Miller. Jacob Albright intervened and succeeded in calming Brobst. Later Brobst was converted and his home became a regular preaching place.

In Hamburg, Pa., ten miles southwest of the Union Iron Works in Berks County, Albright preached in the home of a Mr. Diehl, and immediately west of Hamburg in Bern Township, at the homes of Valentine Brobst, Jacob Kline, P. Dundore and John Miller, a brother of George and Solomon. In Lynn Township, Lehigh County, soon after 1800, Albright preached at the homes of George Custer and Solomon W. Frederick.

It is very difficult to trace the preaching of Albright west of the Susquehanna before 1800, and it is possible that he concentrated his earliest efforts in his neighboring counties. Soon after 1800, however, it is certain that he preached at some of the common preaching places for travelling evangelists. Soon he found regular appointments at the homes of Abraham Eyer, Martin Dreisbach, Jr., John Aurand and John Ranck in Union County, J. Steffy in Centre County, John Rough in

Juniata County and John Walter in Snyder County. In Decatur Township, Mifflin County, the homes of John Thomas, David Herpster, and Andrew Wonder, lately moved from York County, were opened for religious services under the leadership of Jacob Albright.

In the fall of 1802 Albright and John Walter held an unusually successful general meeting, very likely the second in the history of the church, at the home of John Thomas. Even greater success accompanied a similar meeting in June 1803, and a class was formed there that year. Frederick Herpster was chosen as the class leader and Isaac Gill as his assistant. They were both sons-in-law of Mr. Thomas. In 1807, Herpster later became a minister about the same time as did John Thomas, Jr. This class (now called Lauver's) is the oldest organized congregation in the entire denomination. The land on which the present edifice stands is also the oldest property deeded to the denomination having been granted by John Thomas as early as 1812.

Another congregation with a very long continuous history is the St. James congregation about six miles northwest of Liverpool, Pennsylvania. This class was organized in 1803 and the preaching places were the homes of John Rough and J. Diehl.

Albright also travelled into Virginia whither many German people had moved from Pennsylvania. When the work was begun in these areas Albright travelled in wider circles including Bucks, Northampton, Northumberland, and Centre Counties. Very rarely did he preach in churches; in whatever place presented itself, a school house, barn, dwelling, a grove, a street or a highway in the country, wherever there was an opportunity to speak to his fellow Pennsylvania Germans, Albright preached. The early years of his preaching were confined largely to three counties, but persecution finally drove Albright into larger fields. Before his untimely death, Albright had preached in twenty-two counties of Pennsylvania and in Maryland and Virginia and had won over three hundred souls in his ministry of less than twelve years, and gave impetus to the movement that we are pleased to call The Evangelical Church.

George Miller was converted in 1799 under Albright's soul-stirring preaching from the text *Jeremiah 21:8*. Albright had the ability to hold his congregations spell bound although he was not boisterous or unduly emotional in his presentations. The simplicity of his words and the irrefutable logic of his arguments held the attention of his auditors for hours at a time and frequently left them disgusted with a life of sin and determined to reform. Albright was deeply concerned about his converts and followers, too. George Miller tells of a conversation with Albright after the powerful sermon which led him to his new religious experience. Albright spoke briefly with him telling him to "pray earnestly, humble yourself, take the cross of Christ upon you and

believe with the heart, and then you will soon find peace.”<sup>16</sup> Miller found this practical exhortation of value in strengthening his spiritual life through meditation and devotion.

### 17. ALBRIGHT'S PERSON AND MANNER

Jacob Albright was naturally well endowed for a position of religious leadership. Many have described his manner as exceedingly gracious. He had an impressive expression of countenance. Miller describes him as being humble in appearance, having a “pious and cheerful countenance which seemed to glow with love to God and man, . . . and a mild but penetrating look which captivated me.”

Unfortunately there are no actual photographs of Albright in existence. Reuben Yeakel, while preparing his history of the church, had a composite portrait of Jacob Albright made from descriptions of those who had seen him. While this is the most widely distributed and perhaps the most commonly accepted likeness of the founder, it is hardly the most accurate.

A very interesting study of Albright is the caricature sketch by Louis Miller, which is now in the possession of the York County Historical Society. Miller was an amateur artist in York who became widely known for his sketches of many prominent visitors to his city. This sketch, which was done by the artist some time after Albright's death, shows him to be a man of commanding presence and personality with very strong facial features. Franz Loeher<sup>17</sup> describes him as being six feet tall, with a high forehead, clear and penetrating eyes, and aquiline nose. Miller's sketch verifies these characteristics. In many ways the family traits to the fifth generation are similar to those of Jacob Albright here portrayed. Most of his grandsons were six feet or more tall and had prominent noses.

Stapleton describes Albright as “of sanguine temperament, of good size, but somewhat spare, a high and intellectual forehead, deep set blue eyes, and dark hair. His nose was somewhat aquiline and his chin prominent. He was active in his movements, somewhat reserved in his demeanor, yet approachable and friendly. His habits were very precise and methodical.”<sup>18</sup>

It was quite characteristic of a conservative man like Albright to wear his hair straight down over his forehead as all pictures of him clearly show. Henry Boehm in describing Bishop Whatcoat writes, “He combed it (his hair) straight down over his forehead, the Methodist fashion in those days. It would have been considered out of order

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<sup>16</sup> *MLA*, p. 63.

<sup>17</sup> Loeher, Franz, *op. cit.*, p. 438.

<sup>18</sup> *Centennial Program of 1907*, Harrisburg, Pa., 1907, p. 50f.



to have worn it so as to exhibit a noble forehead." <sup>19</sup> Here then is an excellent reason from a contemporary source for the custom of one who might indeed have combed his hair back to reveal a noble forehead if the physical characteristics of his descendants were true of him.

Albright also followed the custom of the Methodist preachers in wearing knee breeches and leggings. Asbury and Boehm invariably wore them. When some of the Methodist ministers discontinued this manner of dress about 1810, Asbury strenuously disapproved.<sup>20</sup>

Frequently, when Albright preached, it is said that his face literally shone. It was his custom, when possible, to spend a period of considerable length in prayer before his sermons. After such communion alone with God, when he emerged to preach, it was remarked that his face was lit up with a singular glow of holiness. One aged woman declared, "Oh, he was as beautiful as an angel."

"Mr. Albright's sermons were plain,—well adapted to the capacities of his hearers, and generally full of unction and irresistible power. His whole soul was in the work, and God enabled him to preach the Gospel with great freedom of speech. It often happened that his hearers were carried away by his sermons as by an irresistible torrent, and were so powerfully moved and affected, that many became convinced of their lost condition and repented; while the believers were always greatly edified and encouraged by his discourses. Opposition, slander, calumny, and persecution were, as a matter of course, not wanting; . . . Lukewarm and slothful nominal Christians, dead in trespasses and sins, read their sentence of condemnation in his sermons which reproved all injustice, sanctimoniousness and hypocrisy; and even well disposed Christians sometimes took offence at his unusual zeal in the cause of his Divine Master." <sup>21</sup>

Albright was a thorough student of the Bible and consequently based much of his preaching directly on the Scriptures. Being a lover of order and discipline in the work of the church, it is quite natural that he was always firm in matters of doctrine and polity. With little opportunity for training on the part of his early preachers, it was quite necessary that he should assume personal responsibility for setting the standard for the teaching of sound doctrine. Theologically he was conservative and reflected the doctrines of the Methodist Church and their foundation on the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Anglican Church. With all his scriptural and doctrinal emphasis Albright preached very effectively and clearly. His homiletic developments were often illuminated by splendid analogies as on the occasion of the second general meeting during the summer of 1802 at the home of John Thomas

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<sup>19</sup> Boehm, Henry, *Reminiscences*, p. 142.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 439.

<sup>21</sup> *OH*, p. 20.

when he preached on the text *John 8:12*, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Father Wonder tells that on this occasion Albright likened the "light of the world" to the sun which through the spring season rises higher and higher and sheds its rays of truth upon the hearts of men who will yield to its benediction. So he continued the analogy likening the blessings of the "light of the world" to the beneficence of the sun. That the sermon was very effective, making a deep impression upon the congregation, is also attested by the venerable Mr. Wonder. And of the preacher he said that his otherwise impressive person appeared especially graceful.

Differing from many of his companions in the ministry Albright was calm and deliberate in his introductions, somewhat argumentative and critical. The strength of his preaching lay in the fact that his sermons were very methodical, convincing, and biblical. His power of eloquence depended upon his logical development of thought, and while many of his assistants depended merely upon emotional appeal Albright preached more profoundly. Indeed he had a natural gift of humor and was able time and again to clinch his arguments and even at times to confound his enemies with his subtle wit.

As a minister Albright tried to practise personally all the doctrines which he taught. This developed a consistency that so many of his friends admired in him. He preached holiness of heart and purity of life, denouncing the use of tobacco and strong drinks which was seldom done in the pulpit in his day, thus showing a fearlessness and an entire disregard for his personal safety or what others might think of him.<sup>22</sup>

## 18. THE ACTUAL BEGINNING OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

About five years before the first formal organization of the followers of Jacob Albright, a group of five men met to discuss their efforts to do the work of God and the oppositions which they were encountering. They resolved to unite themselves very closely. This first group, in addition to Jacob Albright, was probably comprised of Charles Bisse, Samuel Liesser, Peter Walter, and Abraham Buckwalter. Charles Bisse relates that after their discussion "we went to prayer, and while we prayed divine power came upon us so extraordinarily that we all became permeated by it." According to Henry Stetzel this meeting took place in 1797 or 1798. It was probably held in the home of Peter Walter, which was the most centrally located.<sup>23</sup>

In the year 1800 Albright was convinced that since his followers had increased to such an extent some form of supervision should be pro-

<sup>22</sup> *CB*, 1842, p. 141.

<sup>23</sup> *YH*(1), p. 51 and cf. note 13, this chapter.

vided for their religious nurture. He was especially concerned about their religious meetings and activities while he was preaching in other parts of the country. It followed naturally that Albright should select the "class" type of organization which was already in use among the Methodists and with which he was familiar. Three such "class" groups were formed.

There is no finer way of describing the actual beginning of the organization of the Evangelical Church than in the words of George Miller who kept the minutes of the conference sessions until 1813 and who under date of 1800 wrote:

"The Lord our God, who always imparts sufficient light to men to work within them a good will and purpose, also bestows the power to do of his good pleasure and doubtless enables everyone who wills to perform his commandments and to become a diligent co-worker in the kingdom of grace according to the ability that has been given him.

"Moreover Christ the Shepherd and Bishop of all souls gathers and edifies his church in manifold ways, but more especially through such who are faithful fellow-workers with his grace, whom he enlightens and sanctifies by his Holy Spirit. And whenever in the past the needs of Christendom have required it, he has, in various ways through his wise Providence, caused anew the revival of true godliness by means of his devoted servants. We therefore accept as a gift from the Lord, that which he has wrought through his servant Jacob Albright, the Evangelical preacher; for we perceive that it has pleased the Lord to work, and spread abroad his knowledge through the counsel and direction of this godly man.

"Under the direction of this devout preacher, various persons united themselves, in the year of our Lord 1800, to pray with and for each other, in order that they might be saved from sin and flee from the wrath to come. In order to begin and carry out this good and momentous work, they decided to spend each Sunday in social prayer, and to set apart every Wednesday evening for prayer meeting. Studiously and with diligence they sought to avoid everything evil and sinful and to do all manner of good as God gave them strength and ability. The number of those disposed to attend such meetings soon increased and the work grew from year to year, as the records will show. This was the origin of the united Evangelical Association, the operations of which at first extended throughout the counties of Berks and Northampton in the State of Pennsylvania. Because of their peculiarly earnest manner in worship, and more especially because Jacob Albright, by the grace of God, was the instrumental cause of their solemn union, they were at first called 'The Albrights' by other Christian denominations."

Miller's notations regarding 1801 and 1802 are exceedingly brief, and accordingly are added here.

"In the year of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ 1801, the Association added only a few to its number. Several persons sought and



found grace unto the pardon of their sins, so that they knew and were assured that God was their reconciled Father through Jesus Christ.

"1802—During this year twenty persons united with the Association. Among them was a young man named John Walter, who entered the work of the ministry as a preacher on probation under the direction of the Rev. Jacob Albright."

This then is the first history of the Evangelical Church and was written by one who knew the church from the beginning and who was her most prolific and effective literary contributor in those earliest days. Miller must have written this brief history sometime during or before 1813, for after that time the minutes of the conference appear in the hand of John Dreisbach. His fellow ministers thought so highly of Miller's work that at their annual session in New Berlin June 7-11, 1819, they ordered his work and all subsequent minutes with it to be copied into a suitable conference record. This was done by John Dreisbach January 31, 1820, and the original document is now in the vaults of the Publishing House in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

The first of Albright's classes was organized at the home of Peter Walter in Rock Hill, Bucks County. He and his wife, Margaret, reared a large family of which the second son, John (1781-1818), became Albright's first assistant. In this home Albright had met with the first group of five laymen at the Pentecost meeting which became the first bond of union of the Evangelical Church. Charles Bisse, later a minister of the church, was also a member of this first class. The group was called Walter's class, and Peter Walter was the class leader.

Liesser's class was formed at the Colebrookdale Iron Works near Barto, Berks County, and was under the leadership of Samuel Liesser (1761-1836), a substantial farmer, who had served in the Revolutionary War, and in whose commodious home many meetings were held. His brother, Abraham (1770-1805), later a minister of the new church, was also a member of this second class. The Liessers had previously been members of the Hoff's Reformed church nearby. It was at the home of Liesser that Albright was formally ordained. Associated with the brothers in this class were Abraham (1761-1837) and Joseph Buckwalter (1767-1838) and their families, and Alexander Jameson. John Buckwalter (1787-1872), son of Abraham and Barbara, was licensed to preach in 1812 but apparently served only one year.

A third group was organized in Northampton County in the home of George Phillips, who was the leader of the class and whose name the class bore. The leading members of this group were Phillips's sons, Conrad, Jacob, and Peter, Jacob Riedy, Philip and Adam Miller and Mrs. Barbara Hecht (d. 1808), who later left the first bequest of \$100.00 to the Albright preachers.

The total enrollment of these groups in 1800 was still only twenty. Only a few areas in which Albright had worked were thus organized and it has been estimated that there were several hundred others who might have been included at the first if similar classes had been established in other parts.

During the years until the meeting of the Conference of 1803, five or six similar classes and a number of provisional classes west of the Susquehanna were organized in communities in which Albright was successful in winning numerous converts to his way of religious thinking and living. Miller's class was formed after Easter 1803 under the leadership of George Miller. Their meeting place was Solomon Miller's home in Brunswick Township, Schuylkill County. A class was organized at the home of Leonard Zimmerman and his wife Sophia in Schuylkill County in 1803. Albright had preached in this home as early as 1797. Methodists as well as Evangelicals preached here until Mr. Zimmerman's death in 1812. Their youngest son, Leonard, was licensed to preach in 1811. About this time there also appears to have been a class formed in Lynn Township, Lehigh County. The Thomas class, led by John Thomas, was begun in Decatur Township, Mifflin County, as a provisional class in 1803. A provisional class was also organized in Pfoutz Valley, Juniata County, before the close of 1803. A provisional class was apparently one which was served with less regularity because of its distance from the center of the movement.

This was the real beginning of the Evangelical Church. It is true that there were as yet no *Discipline* or code of laws, no articles of faith, not even a name to distinguish the followers of Albright, save where in derision they were known as "Die Albrecht's Leute" (The Albright's People). Later this name was really used by the group and the first *Discipline* prepared by George Miller in the German language was known as *The Rule of Order and Faith of the Albright's People*. Here, then, in the formation of these first classes is the first step in organization which was to make the work of Albright of a permanent nature and here the denomination had its real beginning. Albright describes his own effort in organization,

"Having preached about four years, and having made special efforts to preach the Gospel where vital Godliness and Christian discipline were unknown, I endeavored, through the grace of God which had been given me, to give these awakened and converted persons such instructions as they needed, in order to work out their soul's salvation, and edify each other in the bonds of Christian fellowship, and in the unity of faith, in accordance with the teaching of Christ and his apostles. God also granted his blessing upon the undertaking. Many who had previously lived in darkness and ignorance, received the light of truth through the instrumentality and assistance of this union; and God,

my helper and protector, also strengthened my own heart and mind with his grace, so that I was not only enabled to preach pure doctrine to those whom he had entrusted to me, but also endeavored to establish them by my own example." <sup>24</sup>

Here was the supreme motive of Jacob Albright. He cared not for any high sounding organization that would bear and perpetuate his name, nor for a highly formed and complex organization, though in all things he dearly loved order and precision. He and his first followers were primarily concerned with leading men and women into a significant experience of God. This they considered essential as is also clearly shown from an exhortation which he gave his followers in one of his last public meetings:

"In all that you do, or think of doing, let your object be to enhance God's glory, and advance the work of his grace in your own hearts, as well as among your brethren and sisters; and be diligent co-workers in the way which God has pointed out to you, to which he will grant you his blessing." <sup>25</sup>

### 19. ALBRIGHT'S FIRST ASSISTANT

Among those few members of Albright's first classes, was a promising young man, John Walter, son of the first class leader, Peter Walter. John was born near Quakertown, Pennsylvania, August 21, 1781. His parents were poor and his education so seriously neglected that he could read only with difficulty. Before reaching his majority he had acquired the art of basketmaking and the trade of a tailor. He had probably heard Albright speak on his first preaching tour in that vicinity. He was so impressed with the new preacher that he gave his life to following him, and even decided to go with Albright to Lancaster County to work for him in his tile business. At the age of nineteen or twenty, Walter accompanied Albright on his preaching tours and sometimes addressed the gatherings. In 1802 he began to preach and became Albright's first assistant.

Walter was so lacking in training for his work that he was often compelled to "spell" his texts and hymns, yet, according to the testimony of his hearers, both among the followers of Albright and also of other denominations, Walter was an unusually powerful preacher and gave promise of becoming one of the greatest preachers of America.<sup>26</sup> At New Berlin, Pennsylvania, a very strange incident is reported to have occurred during the preaching of Walter, which Dr. Stapleton<sup>27</sup> considers sufficiently attested by tradition to quote. Walter had fre-

<sup>24</sup> *MLA*, p. 34.

<sup>25</sup> *MLA*, p. 34.

<sup>26</sup> *YA*, pp. 134-138.

<sup>27</sup> *SW*, p. 70f.



quently preached in the schoolhouse in this Union County village, but finally had been forbidden to do so because of prejudice. On arriving in the town he found the schoolhouse closed and proceeded to preach from its steps. Gradually he raised his powerful voice until he could be plainly heard all over the village by those who sat in their homes. Near the climax of his sermon, the door of the schoolhouse suddenly burst open, and Walter taking advantage of the situation, said, "God has opened us a door in New Berlin and he will establish his work here in spite of the opposition of hell and that of wicked men." Within a short time a strong congregation built the first church of the denomination in this village, where the first press and publishing house were established and later the first permanent educational institution was founded.

The desperate earnestness of Walter is shown in the account of his trip of forty miles or more from Buffalo Valley to a preaching appointment. There was no road to the place and Walter was compelled to follow a forest trail. The ground was so wet and slippery that his progress was very slow. He was overtaken by darkness and finally became entangled in underbrush and rocks so that he could go no farther. The people at the home of Mr. Thomas, where he was expected to preach, waited until ten o'clock and then decided that Walter would not come that night. On their way home the group heard some shouts coming faintly from a great distance in the woods. With torches they finally found and rescued their preacher whose powerful voice they had recognized. Walter was wet, cold, hungry and tired, but preached to the group with much power for two hours before retiring.

Walter was very popular as a preacher at camp meetings. Often he turned the tide from a series of meetings of little interest to one with much power and effectiveness in soul winning. He also wrote a number of German hymns and in 1810 published in Reading, Pennsylvania, the first hymn book for the denomination, "Eine Kleine Sammlung alter und neuer Geistreicher Lieder." It contained fifty-six hymns and did excellent service for the church. At the age of twenty-seven Walter married Christiana Becker at Mühlbach, Lebanon County, now Kleinfeltersville, Pennsylvania, August 8, 1808. Of this marriage were born a daughter, Catherine, and two sons, John and Peter, the latter dying in infancy.

Letters from this great preacher to his wife are filled with pious exhortations, practical advice and deep affection. Many of his years he spent away from home carrying on the work which his spiritual father, Jacob Albright, had begun. That there were very serious dangers in their methods of travel and long journeys, as well as in the antagonism and persecution among opponents is evident from a letter which Walter wrote his wife, January 18, 1813; yet, he could say:

"I am still well and alive, God be praised for it." Walter's letters show a profound affection for his wife and family as well as deep concern for their constant bodily and spiritual welfare. In the letter of January 18, 1813, he continues:

"I hope these lines will find you and the children well also. Keep yourself only to God in watchfulness and prayer, then he will stand by you and sweeten all your sorrow."

Under the date of June 15, 1809, Walter wrote:

"My dear wife, hearty greetings: May the Lord be your portion, Christ your support and the Holy Ghost your Comforter and Guide! . . . My prayer and the remembrance of my heart were open for you, my dear wife, that God might also bestow upon you the measure of his grace, and that he might comfort you in all your trials, and deliver you from all temptations and unnecessary cares, that may press your heart and lead from God. Only keep yourself near to God in watchfulness and prayer, then you will find at all times a strong consolation and great peace in God through Jesus Christ for your soul. What we deny ourselves in this world for God, and the Gospel, and what we suffer for Jesus' sake, God will abundantly recompense with eternal consolation in his Kingdom.

"My dear wife, pray earnestly for me and the cause of God. May God be your husband and comforter! I have entrusted you to him in my absence, and I believe that he will provide for and protect you and me. May he keep us unto eternal life. I do not expect to get home until I come to the protracted meeting. But if I live and am well, I will sure come home July 26th or 27th. Again a thousand greetings! Only pray earnestly to God that we may be happy in time and in eternity."

The devotional and mystical type of experience of Walter is clearly seen as he continues:

"My soul pours itself out daily for you in prayer. At the throne of grace you can daily meet me, at least in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, even though we must be separated in body."<sup>28</sup>

Walter, like his spiritual father, weakened his body with undue fasting and exposure so that he was compelled to retire from the active work of the ministry in 1813 while serving the Lancaster and Schuylkill circuit. When the first traces of tuberculosis appeared he continued his work until he was compelled to stop when his sickness took a turn for the worse.

He bought a small farm of some eighteen acres in Hanover Township, Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, and here he spent the remaining days of his life near his father's old homestead and among friends. During these years he was scarcely able to make a living and had to

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<sup>28</sup> Letters quoted in Biography of Walter in *YA*, p. 158f.

depend upon friends. When one scans the landscape immediately surrounding the private cemetery located on the farm on which Walter lived, died and was buried, it is no mystery that he found difficulty in making a living from those rocky hills.

## 20. BIG MEETINGS

Periodic preaching in appointed places gradually became a scheduled series of services for Jacob Albright. On his visits in certain quarters, the people listened so gladly that often a weekend series of services was planned. Frequently these meetings would begin Saturday afternoon when many of the people would gather from long distances. Another service was held Saturday night and often three more on Sunday. Gradually these meetings grew into the "Quarterly Meetings" and a little later into the camp meetings which in that time proved so fruitful in increasing the membership of the church.

The first of the "big meetings," as they were then called, was held by Jacob Albright in 1802 at the home of Samuel Liesser, Jr. Later in the same year another gathering was held at the home of John Thomas in Mifflin County. The third was held a few weeks later at Conrad Phillips's home, the fourth at the home of Solomon Miller over Easter, 1803, and another after harvest the same year at the home of John Thomas. This type of religious meeting raised much opposition among conservative members of the established churches and there were always others who were willing enough to cause disturbances. At the second meeting of this kind, one is known to have said, "If I only had powder that would make no report, I would soon shoot that Albright down."<sup>29</sup>

By the year 1803 the number of members in Albright's classes had increased to forty. In this year he found his second assistant in Abraham Liesser, who had been converted under his preaching sometime before.

It was to the thousands of German people, many of whom were simply religiously indolent like Jacob Albright himself had been, that these "big" meetings made a tremendous appeal. Here were voices similar to those they had first heard coming from their spiritual leaders in this country and some who had come to America more recently remembered hearing in their homeland. Many thousands of these German people responded readily to the preaching of the travelling evangelists of the Reformed, the Methodist, the United Brethren, and the Evangelical Churches. The first members of the Evangelical Church, then, were not religiously illiterate or ignorant but unguided and indolent. They needed leaders to call them back to the religious life

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<sup>29</sup> Reported by Father Wonder in YH(1), p. 55.



they had neglected and in Jacob Albright and his preachers literally thousands found such leaders.

## 21. THE CONFERENCE OF 1803 AND ALBRIGHT'S ORDINATION

Near the close of 1803, after seven years of calling his fellow Pennsylvania Germans to their religious duties, Albright was formally ordained by his associates. He met in council with his two assistants, John Walter and Abraham Liesser, and fourteen of his principal laymen at the home of Samuel Liesser, in Berks County.<sup>80</sup> Others present were Peter Walter and Charles Bisse of Walter's class; George Phillips and his sons, Jacob and Conrad, Adam Miller and Jacob Riedy of Phillips's class; George and Solomon Miller, Christian, John and Michael Brobst from the Miller class; and Solomon W. Fredereci of Lehigh County. Their session extended through two days.

This was the first distinctly business session held by the followers of Jacob Albright. First of all they declared themselves an ecclesiastical organization and adopted the Holy Scriptures as their guide and rule of faith. Jacob Albright was ordained as a minister of the gospel by John Walter and Abraham Liesser, his assistants, through prayer and the laying on of their hands and the entire group signed the following certificate which was presented to him:

"From the Elders and Brethren of His Society of Evangelical Friends: We the undersigned Evangelical and Christian friends, declare and recognize Jacob Albright as a genuine (Wahrhaftigen) Evangelical preacher in word and deed, and a believer in the Universal Christian Church and the communion of saints. This testify we as brethren and elders of his Society (Gemeinde). Given in the State of Pennsylvania, November 5, 1803."

At this conference it was reported that five classes had now been organized, Walter's, Liesser's, Phillips's, Zimmerman's and Miller's, together with some provisional classes west of the Susquehanna River. It was reported that the general or "big" meetings had been held at Liesser's in June, 1802, at Thomas's in the fall of that year, another a few weeks later at Conrad Phillips's, and a fourth at Solomon Miller's at Easter, 1803, and another at Thomas's after harvest that year.

The record of this conference is doubly interesting because it portrays the formal organization of the Evangelical Church and also because of the attention that is given to the development of the Christian

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<sup>80</sup> This meeting could not have been held at Mühlbach, as some maintain, for in 1803 no class existed there. John Dreisbach held that the 1803 conference met at the Samuel Liesser home. Cf. *YH*(1), p. 56 and *YA*, p. 88 footnotes.

life and experience in those first members. It is clearly stated that in 1803 there were forty members, "most of whom were converted." Abraham Liesser was newly received as the third minister of the church. Of John Walter, who had been assisting Albright the record very briefly but very significantly says, "John Walter had grown in grace."

## 22. ALBRIGHT'S RELATION TO THE METHODIST AND OTHER CHURCHES

By his ordination as a minister and preacher of a religious society or church, Albright's relation to the clergy of other groups of Christians was changed. There have been attempts, at times, to impugn Albright's right to be regarded as a duly ordained minister, and this was duplicated in the case of his co-workers, ordained to the ministry of his church.

The first question logically to be raised is, What was Albright's relation to the Methodist Church at the time of the Conference of 1803? More than seven years before he had been granted a license as a local preacher or exhorter in the Methodist Church connected with the class of Isaac Davis near Hahnstown, Pennsylvania. In 1796 he had begun his preaching tours and of necessity found it impossible to be present at the regular quarterly conference meetings of the class to which he belonged. In those days, habitual absence from the meetings of the Methodist classes meant that one's name would be lifted from the roll and there is no doubt that this is what happened to the name of Jacob Albright.

Time and again, however, Albright and his co-laborers also emphatically denied that they were Methodists. George Miller was asked one night by his host, a Mr. Leshner, whom he visited on a trip through Lancaster County, whether he was a Methodist preacher. Miller insisted that he was not a Methodist. But because Miller had prayed with the family in the evening and the morning, Mr. Leshner insisted, "But you are a preacher and to what denomination do you belong?" "I am an Evangelical," replied Miller, "and preach the gospel to all men who will receive and hear me."

This insistence on their distinction from the Methodists gained opportunities for Albright's preachers in localities where the Methodists were not in good favor. Mr. Leshner continued to press George Miller and said, "Tell me the truth, are you not a Methodist?" "You can depend upon it," Miller assured him. "Well then I would like to hear you preach, but Methodists I will not receive, for they scream too loud," said Leshner, "but perhaps you preach so loud too? But I will announce a meeting for you. . . ."

In this case being a preacher of an unknown group gained for Miller a hearing even though there was a great similarity between the Evangelicals and Methodists. At the second preaching appointment which Miller filled at Lesher's house, sinners were converted and in their seeking for forgiveness prayed so loudly that Lesher left the meeting. Miller reports that later on Lesher and his entire family were converted and became members of the Evangelical Church.<sup>81</sup>

Although the Methodists in those early days saw no room for religious work among the German people, they freely recognized the Evangelical preachers on a parity with their own and so also did the leaders of other denominations. The language barrier was the real reason that Albright's followers failed to unite with the Methodists.

Sometime during this year, probably August 2 or 10, 1810, John Dreisbach met Bishop Francis Asbury, and his traveling companion the Rev. Henry Boehm, riding southward along the Susquehanna river. Strangely enough there was in this very group, Henry Boehm (1775-1875), one of three young men in the Methodist Church who had been preaching in the German language since 1800. The other German Methodist preachers were Jacob Gruber (1778-1850) and Peter Beaver (d. 1849), grandfather of General James A. Beaver, Governor of Pennsylvania. In 1803-4 Boehm and Gruber had at least twenty German preaching places in Eastern Pennsylvania.<sup>82</sup> Because of the far-reaching importance of this meeting, we shall permit Dreisbach to describe it:

"After we had, for sometime, freely conversed on various Christian topics, the Bishop made me a very liberal and respectable offer, on certain conditions to unite with his church. I was to withdraw from the Evangelical Association, and go with them to Baltimore to attend their conference; there to join them, and to travel a year with Jacob Gruber (a second of the three German preachers among the Methodists), who was then presiding elder, for the purpose of better acquainting myself with the English language, wherein Brother Gruber might be very useful to me, that I might be able to preach, according to circumstances, both in German and English; and I was to receive my salary as if I had travelled on a circuit, etc. Moreover, the bishop remarked that, by being able to preach in both languages, I could make myself so much more useful, and that among them there would be less danger of my becoming self-conceited, and to fall away, than in my present position, etc. But however enticing the offer and truthful the statement of the bishop was, yet I could not determine in my mind to take such a treacherous step toward the Evangelical Association. I therefore told the bishop, that we considered ourselves called of God to labor principally among the German population, and that thus far our labors

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<sup>81</sup> *MLA*, p. 85f.

<sup>82</sup> Boehm, H., *Reminiscences*, p. 106.



had not been in vain. To this he replied that the German language could not exist much longer in this country, etc. I rejoined, that if this should ever be the case, it would then be time enough to discontinue preaching in German, and gave as my opinion that this would not very soon occur, but that the German language would rather increase, at least as the immigration from the old world would continue. I then gave him my views, in which I expected my brethren to concur, and made him the following offer: 'If you will give us German circuits, districts and conferences, we are willing to make your church ours, be one people with you, and have one and the same church government.' 'This cannot be—it would not be expedient,' was the bishop's reply."<sup>33</sup>

The very friendly spirit existing between these leaders of the two churches is beautifully manifested in the fact that when they separated near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Bishop Asbury not only embraced Dreisbach and bade him godspeed in his work but also gave him a copy of J. W. de la Flechere's (Fletcher's) *Portrait of St. Paul*, which is a fine practical analysis of the Christian life based on St. Paul. Almost half a century later Orwig in writing of this incident stated his belief that a number of Dreisbach's associates might have opposed even his basis of a union with the Methodists. But Orwig, undoubtedly reflecting the attitude of his church in the middle of the nineteenth century, continues,

"These two Christian denominations have always lived in harmony and peace, and agree in doctrine, manner of operation, and church government nearly in every point. In this respect there would be no impediment to union. And there are perhaps no two Christian denominations which, on the whole, manifest to one another so much friendship and confidence, as the Evangelical Association and the Methodist Church."<sup>34</sup>

It is reported a similar incident previously occurred in the life of Jacob Albright.<sup>35</sup> Albright and Bishops Asbury and Lee were on their way to attend a Methodist Conference. When they stopped at an inn to spend the night these men discussed the matter of working in the Germany language. Asbury and Lee were adamant in their opposition to such work. In the morning Albright saddled his horse and turned homeward, saying, "If there is no room in the Methodist Church to work in the German language and win the Pennsylvania Germans, I am going back to do that work."

<sup>33</sup> Dreisbach's Journal, quoted in *OH*, p. 57. Also cf. Dreisbach in *EM*, 1855, p. 26.

<sup>34</sup> *OH*, p. 58.

<sup>35</sup> Tradition through Mrs. Louisa A. Zipperer, Chicago, Illinois, to the author. Mrs. Zipperer (Louisa Ehrhardt) as a young teacher was visited by Dr. William Jones, almost 80, who tried to persuade her to join his Methodist Episcopal Church and told this incident which he claimed Bishop Asbury had told him.

From these incidents, it is correctly inferred that Albright and his followers claimed no official connection with the Methodist Church and no official ordination through that source. Neither were there any clergymen among the early Evangelicals who had come from other denominations, from whom official clerical ordination might have been derived. Now in the case of the church of the United Brethren in Christ, Bishop Otterbein had been a clergyman of the German Reformed Church and through him this denomination derived official clerical ordination.

Among the chief assailants of the validity of the ministerial orders of Evangelical Church and of the recognition of the denomination as a Christian church was Dr. John W. Nevin, professor in the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church at Mercersburg, Pennsylvania. The question was brought to the fore when a minister of the Evangelical Church sought admission to the Reformed communion and clergy. When the matter was finally brought to a vote of the classis at Greencastle, Pennsylvania, in 1849, after the attack of Dr. Nevin, all but four of the body voted that the Evangelical Church was not a part of the Christian church. After their vote the minister was re-ordained according to their rite.<sup>36</sup> The Reformed Church in recent years has taken an entirely different attitude toward the Evangelical Church. They have admitted Evangelical ministers into their ranks without reordination and have transferred some of their clergy to the Evangelical Church. They have freely admitted students of the Evangelical Church into their theological seminaries and have also sent some of their students to the seminaries of the Evangelical Church. A very friendly relation now exists between the denominations and in 1930 there was actually a movement to unite these churches, together with the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Synod of North America into the United Church of America. This proposal of union has never been carried out, although the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America united to become the Evangelical and Reformed Church on June 26, 1934.

The whole matter of Albright's ordination becomes the more complicated when we seek to find the group or groups from whom he might have obtained ordination. He had sprung from the old German churches but the entire emphasis of his work was an open protest against their spiritual impotence and therefore it was natural that he could not seek ordination there. We have shown previously that he had enjoyed only the most friendly relation with the United Brethren in Christ and their leaders Boehm and Otterbein. Otterbein had been

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<sup>36</sup> For detailed argument of Dr. Nevin see *The Mercersburg Review*, July, 1849, pp. 381-386.

ordained in the Reformed Church in Germany and might have given Albright official clerical ordination. It must be definitely remembered, however, that the work of the United Brethren in Christ was almost entirely in the hands of lay evangelists, as was also that of the Methodists for many years. Otterbein ordained none of his followers until more than five years after the death of Albright, when on October 2, 1813, he ordained three men, one of whom was Christian Newcomer who had been preaching more than twenty years and in the month of May, previous, had already been elected a bishop of the United Brethren Church.<sup>87</sup> Albright very likely also could have found doctrinal reasons for not seeking sanction for his work through ordination from this source, if that possibility had ever occurred to him, despite Otterbein's failure to practice the rite of ordination. Albright placed broad emphasis on the sacraments and could hardly have been satisfied with the brief creed consisting of five articles, which Otterbein and his followers adopted at their first conference in 1789. In a postscript to this creed the sacraments were mentioned; baptism was recommended as a sign, the Lord's Supper as commemorative, and feet washing as an example.

One might logically have expected Albright to seek his ordination at the hands of the Methodists among whom he was an official lay evangelist. He could have found no doctrinal hindrances here, for before his death he discussed and recommended their doctrine to George Miller. Upon Albright's death, Miller completed the first *Discipline* and articles of faith, which, when they appeared in print in 1809, were almost identical with those of the Methodists. It might be concluded that it was the lack of interest of the Methodists which led Albright to go on independently. The facts in the case might easily lead one to believe that it was the work of Albright which gradually led the Methodists to take a greater interest in the work among the German people. One of the very best sources of information about the thought and feeling of Asbury are the "Reminiscences" of the Rev. Henry Boehm who travelled with Asbury during the later years of his life.<sup>88</sup> Boehm insists that Asbury loved the German people and on one occasion ordered him to return from a trip to the West to preach to the German people in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania.<sup>89</sup> At the Methodist conference in Philadelphia, April 2, 1807, William Hunter and Henry Boehm were appointed to Pennsylvania which Boehm interprets to mean the section between the Delaware and the Susquehanna rivers. Boehm, who was one of only three Methodist ministers who could preach German at that time, admits that he was appointed to this field

<sup>87</sup> Drury, A. W., *Life of Otterbein*, Dayton, Ohio, 1913, pp. 356-60.

<sup>88</sup> Boehm, Henry, *op. cit.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.



because he could use the German language.<sup>40</sup> It is interesting to note that this appointment occurred when Albright's work had already become very popular and in the very year of the important Conference of 1807 at which Albright was elected as a bishop. That Albright was highly esteemed by Bishop Asbury is very certain.<sup>41</sup>

Even more striking is the fact that toward the close of the very month in which Jacob Albright died, Bishop Asbury selected Henry Boehm to be his travelling companion. The General Conference of the Methodist Church met in Baltimore, May 1, 1808, Albright's forty-ninth birthday and about the time when he was conducting his last services near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The Methodists were in session until May 22d and the news of Albright's death on May 8th could easily have reached Baltimore before their sessions closed. Striking indeed is also the request of Bishop Asbury that Boehm should have several tracts printed in German in Lancaster, by the printers of the German Methodist *Discipline*, before they departed on their journey together that year. Boehm complied and when the annual tour began Asbury and his companion distributed widely copies of "Characteristics of a True Methodist or a Christian" and "Awake Thou that Sleepest, etc." <sup>42</sup> That Asbury and Boehm encountered many German people and that Boehm preached often to the German people with Asbury's approval is attested by Boehm's notation regarding their visit to Connellsville, Pa. "I held forth in the German. This I did in almost every place." <sup>43</sup> On another occasion Boehm was ordered to take a special side trip, on which he preached six German sermons.<sup>44</sup> While it may have been true that in the beginning Asbury was not inclined to favor work among the German people, it is very certain that toward the close of his life he was ardently supporting just such a work. The very fact that Albright was a very strong and determined individual and with his orderly nature desired security and definiteness in all the work he organized may have prevented his seeking ordination from Asbury. At any rate, it is a logical conclusion that Albright influenced the work and future of the Methodist Church quite as much as the Methodist Church had influenced him.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church, even though he never left the Church of England, was not a supporter of the idea of "apostolic succession." <sup>45</sup> Almost all of Wesley's co-workers were lay evangelists or local preachers. The Methodists built their first chapel

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>41</sup> Simpson, Matthew—*Cyclopedia of Methodism*, Philadelphia, 1881, p. 24.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 192.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.

<sup>45</sup> McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, New York, 1890, Vol. X, p. 914, Col. 2.

in New York City in 1768, and for fifteen years their work was wholly in the hands of lay evangelists. When Asbury came to this country in 1771 at the age of sixteen, he was only a lay evangelist, and although unordained was made general superintendent of all the Methodist work in North America. It was not until the arrival of Dr. Coke in 1784 that ministerial orders were conferred on Asbury, first as a deacon, next day as elder, and then as bishop, an office which he had already, *de facto*, exercised for many years.<sup>46</sup>

In the light of the attitude of the leaders of the other churches in America at that time, it is not very difficult to see why the question of valid orders for his clergy played no large part in the thought of Jacob Albright. His procedure was in conformity with that of his contemporaries and with the general principles of democracy and became the channel through which the Spirit of God gave authority to his church and its ministers.

It is interesting to note that Albright never claimed "apostolic succession" for himself or for his ministers, and that he refrained from performing the functions of the ministry until after his ordination, November 5, 1803. However, after his ordination at the Conference of 1803, he freely administered the sacraments. In November, 1803, Albright baptized Michael, son of Abraham Ream, of Centre County, Pennsylvania, an ancestor of Dr. A. E. Gobble, late President of Central Pennsylvania College. This same year he baptized Mary, daughter of Benjamin Stroh, of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania.<sup>47</sup> So far as we can determine none of his followers have ever laid claim to what is known as "apostolic succession." The conclusive evidence of the validity of the ministry of the Evangelical Church is to be found in the fact that through the years the signal blessing of God has rested upon the labors of this group as they have endeavored to bring the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, with its liberating and enriching power to multitudes of people throughout the world.

During the latter half of the year 1880, there was a discussion in *The Evangelical-Messenger* regarding the question, "Is the Evangelical Association a church?" The discussion centered in the meaning of the words "church" and "association" or "society." The matter was rather quickly quieted with apparent mutual satisfaction. The discussion not only clearly concluded with the opinion that the Evangelical Association was a real church in the same sense that any other denomination was a church but it also helped to clarify the thinking of many readers regarding the true nature of the church of Christ, and led to a finer appreciation of other denominations.<sup>48</sup> The Evangelical Church holds

<sup>46</sup> Asbury, Francis, *Journal*, Vol. 2, p. 378.

<sup>47</sup> *SW*, p. 31f.

<sup>48</sup> *EM*, July 13, 1880, and December 14, 1880.

its rightful place among the Christian denominations, and the ordination of its clergy is accepted as valid. As such it is recognized by all Protestant churches and by Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America of which it is a charter member.

### 23. EXPANSION OF INFLUENCE

After the conference of 1803, the work under Albright and his co-workers, Walter and Liesser, continued to expand steadily. Preaching places were established in the homes of Abraham Eyer, John Aurand, Michael Maize, Martin Dreisbach, Philip Heu, Henry Schmidt, Jacob Hoch, John Schwartz, and Carl Straub. During 1804 these and the appointment at Dreisbach's church (Reformed) were made into the Shamokin Circuit, later called the Northumberland Circuit. This circuit, in its early years, was served by Walter, Liesser, and a new assistant, Alexander Jameson.

The circuits which these early preachers served were in reality large territories. Northampton Circuit, the second circuit to be formed in the church, for example, included preaching places in what is now an area divided into more than twelve counties. It originally included the region of the West Branch Valley of the Susquehanna river as far as Lock Haven, Middle Creek Valley in Snyder County, Dry Valley in Union County and also the fertile Buffalo Valley; thence northward the White Deer Valley and westward the Penn's, Brush and Sugar Valleys. In addition this circuit extended up the north branch of the Susquehanna as far as Luzerne County, south into Perry and Juniata Counties and southwest into Bedford and Cambria Counties.

By 1802 there were a number of followers of the Albright movement west of the Susquehanna. One of the earliest centers was in Penn's Valley in what is now Centre County, where the work was begun in 1802 or 1803. Just a few years afterward Christopher Spangler had opened his home in Brush Valley as a preaching point. While work in eastern Pennsylvania kept growing more and more difficult, it was only natural that the early leaders would turn their attention westward where their every effort seemed to bring good results. It must be remembered, too, that in many of these western preaching places the Evangelical preachers only shared with the preachers of the Reformed, Methodist and United Brethren Churches the opportunity to conduct religious services. It is interesting to note that this resulted in great advantage for the new church.

Some time before 1805 Albright gained entrance into the community of pietistic German people, largely of the Reformed Church, located in Buffalo Valley, Union County. In addition to the homes mentioned above as new preaching places in this region must be added the home of the Rev. Dietrich Aurand, a Reformed pastor. Martin Dreisbach, an



elder in this Reformed Church, also opened his home for preaching services. Other Reformed families by the name of Hoy, Bordner, Wermly, Betz, Dunkel, Herbst, and still others soon became Albright adherents.

The Conference of 1806 sent the new young preacher George Miller into this region and under the strong organizational hand, this entire group in one year was formed into ten new classes. Before Albright's death there were over fifty preaching places in this area which now comprises a large part of the Central Pennsylvania and a lesser part of the Pittsburgh Conferences. The Rev. Dietrich Aurand took a church in another community and his brother John and the majority of the pietistic Reformed people became members of the new church.

The evangelists of other communions now practically abandoned this field and the membership of the Evangelical Church, largely through Miller's very effective ministry, was almost doubled. By the time of the General Conference of 1816, fully one-fourth of the membership of the Evangelical Church lived in this region and more than fifteen classes had been formed.

The center of the new church, in a very short time, was transferred to the west of the Susquehanna river, where she was to establish her first institutions and secure most of her new leaders. Martin Dreisbach's home wielded a great influence in the Albright movement. John Dreisbach, his son, became the outstanding leader of the Evangelical Church after the death of Albright and Miller. Here, in 1816, the first General Conference was held. Henry Niebel, a brother-in-law of John Dreisbach, a student for the ministry of the Reformed Church, came under the influence of Albright and became a minister of the Evangelical Church. These two men, both of Reformed background, gave strong leadership to the new church. Dreisbach was the president and Niebel the secretary of many early conferences. Together they compiled the first hymnbook, revised the *Discipline*, founded the printing establishment, and became the first presiding elders of the church. The home of Abraham Eyer was also very prominent for from it Dreisbach and Niebel each obtained their wives, and in his barn the Annual Conference of 1816 established the publishing business of the church and sent forth her first missionaries to the west.

The village of New Berlin soon came to be the center of this Evangelical community and, as a matter of fact, of the whole denomination. Near it the first Evangelical camp meeting was held in 1810, here the first church lot and graveyard were purchased respectively in 1815 and 1816, and the first church building in the entire denomination and the first publishing house were erected in 1816. This early expansion to the west and in particular the wholesome effect of the phenomenal work of George Miller, who won more than one hundred converts in

eight months in this region, to a large degree determined the future of the life and growth of the Evangelical Church.

The length of time that a minister served on a field of labor in the early days was indefinite; they were moved about as occasion demanded, and often they were transferred to new places before the year was out. Neither did the ministers confine their efforts to their own circuits but reached out into new territory and helped where they were needed. In 1805 the salary of the first preachers was equally divided and each received \$15.30 in cash. John Walter was allowed to collect a separate sum of \$37.33 in order to purchase a horse for use on his circuit.<sup>49</sup>

Albright tells <sup>50</sup> that in his early tours he occasionally received some financial support, which enabled him to go on with his travel and preaching. These gifts also continued when his colleagues began to ride the circuits, even after the organization of the church, but one can see how inadequate they were from a statement made by John Dreisbach, a protégé of Albright, that his own receipts from preaching for a period of six months amounted to nineteen cents.<sup>51</sup> Those first services at the homes of the members of the church must have been very simple, indeed, and their offerings were frequently received on a dinner plate provided by the hostess. Albright's wife sold the tile which Albright made each year to support himself and his family during his preaching tours. George Miller's wife (formerly Magdalena Brobst) sold the products of her spinning and weaving in Reading to buy her husband's horse so that he could serve his circuit. It must be said, however, that these salaries were in addition to the board these preachers and their horses received, for no matter where they went they usually found a welcome and hospitality in the home of some friend.

During 1805, preaching places were established in Lancaster and Dauphin Counties, which were added to the old circuit which now was called Schuylkill and Lancaster Circuit. Northumberland Circuit was extended to include Mifflin and Huntingdon Counties. The total membership of the group had now increased to 75, a gain of 15 over 1804, and an average of fifteen members per year for the first five years of the history of the church. These members were truly courageous. Only those who were desperately in earnest about their religious life would join a church whose members were constantly opposed by the "church" people and whose ministers were threatened, abused, and assailed in the public roads with the vilest of slanders.

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<sup>49</sup> *MLA*, p. 26.

<sup>50</sup> *MLA*, p. 26.

<sup>51</sup> *EM*, Vol. X, p. 197.

In this same year the young preacher Abraham Liesser died, the first of four (Albright, Walter and Miller soon followed him) to contract tuberculosis and to break under the tremendous strain of the work of the early circuit rider. His place was filled by George Miller, leaving four ministers to carry on the work of the church. A young man (C. B.) who was being personally guided by Albright had made splendid progress in preaching. Since he was only a minor, his family took him away and established him as an apprentice at a distant place because they did not wish him or their family to be connected with the new group. Many outspoken opponents of this work, who had previously felt that this "straw-fire" would soon burn itself out, now began to fear that the movement might be permanent. One of these wrote:

"Ho, ye dear people, awake!—awake! seducers and false prophets have come among you who will cause you to fall away from the faith. You have sworn to your church, but these rovers want to seduce you, and if you permit yourselves to be misled by them you become perjurers and covenant-breakers and you will be lost forever and ever. . . . We must defend ourselves better, or else these 'Strawelers' will prevail and take away from us both our place and nation." <sup>52</sup>

The origin of the term, "Strawelers," formerly so often applied in this country to Methodists, to members of the Evangelical Association, and to other zealous Christians, is unknown. W. W. Orwig felt that it was of American origin and derived from the German word "strappeln" meaning to struggle with the feet.

"Enemies and scoffers of zealous and active Christians may have taken occasion to apply this term to them from the fact that in the meetings, under the powerful preaching of the first Methodist preachers in this country, as also of the preachers of the Evangelical Association and others, sinners were often seized with fear and terror, and being wrought upon by the power of God, frequently fell involuntarily to the ground; and, under a deep sense of their lost and wretched condition and danger, like many on the first day of Pentecost, under the preaching of Peter, they exclaimed—what they must do to be saved, and would then wring their hands, struggle to their feet, and make other strange gestures, and when it pleased God to remove from them the burden of their sins, and to give them peace and consolation, they would sometimes leap for joy, burst out into shouting and praising God, and give vent to the joy of their hearts by clapping their hands. Now, such wrestling, similar to that of Jacob with the angel of the covenant, to enter in at the straight gate, such tears of penitence, like those of back-slidden Peter, or of the great sinner at the feet of Jesus, and others being under a sense of guilt, appeared to an ignorant church populace and their blind leaders, as not only foolish, but even absurd and blas-

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<sup>52</sup> YH(1), p. 78.



phemus. Hence, like blind Saul, they thought to do God service, by despising, slandering and persecuting his children and followers. Yet it sometimes happened that some of the greatest scoffers and persecutors were seized, and, before they were aware of it, were so completely overpowered, that they fell, as if struck by lightning, to the ground, and were unable to rise again, until after a severe struggle and earnest prayer by faith in the Son of God, they had obtained the pardon of all their sins, whereupon they praised God with joyful hearts, to the utter astonishment and confusion of their former comrades and associates. Such occurrences then gave rise to the foolish notions of some who believed that the preachers of these people understood magic, and were able to charm persons by looking at them, especially those of weaker constitutions, and particularly females; because they, as a general thing, are neither obdurate and hardened, nor so rebellious as men. Others fancied, that the preachers secretly scattered a certain charming powder over the hearers, whereby the weaker were made to fall down, to cry out, to struggle, to clap their hands, to leap, jump, etc. Others, again, being ashamed of these foolish notions of the vulgar, especially some carnally minded clergymen, and some medical wiseàcres, accounted for that phenomenon on other principles. They either ascribed it at once to the agency of the devil and wicked spirits, or else represented it as an effect of hypochondriasis and hysterics! But admitting this explanation, another difficulty would arise, viz., the fact that most persons with whom the phenomenon in question has taken, and still takes place, had never before been affected with these diseases!"<sup>53</sup>

These physical manifestations are similar to those of the converts in the revivals of Wesley, Whitefield, and Jonathan Edwards. These "strawelers" were a most unpopular people, hated and dreaded more than the devil himself. Very frequently they were further stigmatized by vile epithets from the "church" people. Among the additional titles given them are "Knierrutscher" (Knee-sliders), "Kopfhänger" (Head-hangers), "Schwärmer" (Fanatics), "Krächzer" (Groaners), and "Heuchler" (Hypocrites). In spite of these attacks the early Evangelicals remained loyal to Christ and their church because they had had a definite personal experience.

One of the outstanding events of the year 1805 was the admission of George Miller into the ministry of this group. Miller was born in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, February 16, 1774. His parents, Jacob and Elizabeth Miller, soon afterward moved to Alsace Township, Berks County. Here Mr. Miller established a milling business and erected a substantial stone mill, which is still standing on the old homestead near what is now Temple, Pennsylvania. From his rural home George travelled to Reading during the winter of 1788-1789 to receive catechetical instruction from the minister of Trinity Lutheran Church, where

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<sup>53</sup> *OH*, p. 29f.

he was confirmed with the class on Easter 1789.<sup>54</sup> In 1798 or 1799, young Miller, then only twenty-five, heard Jacob Albright preach from the text, "Behold I set before you the way of life and the way of death." *Jeremiah* 21:8. He wrote in his *Journal* that he was so wrought upon by Albright's preaching that,

"If I had not seized hold of a table I should have fallen to the floor. After the sermon I conversed with him. His exhortation was short, but powerful. He said, 'You must pray earnestly, humble yourself, take the cross of Christ upon you, and believe with the heart, then you will soon find peace.'<sup>55</sup>

Miller spent the next day with Albright, heard him preach again, and at their separation requested to be remembered in his prayers. Miller's heart had been touched but yet not sufficiently to bring him peace. He was long disturbed over his spiritual condition until once more, in 1802, he heard Albright preach. He was so moved that he invited the increasingly popular preacher to make his home a regular preaching appointment. The new convert vividly describes the culmination of his own experience:

"—I prayed a great deal, beseeching God in my closet for the forgiveness of my sins. The grief of my soul was so great that I had the appearance of being sick, nothing in the world affording me any pleasure; I only had hungering and thirsting for the grace of God in the pardon of my sins. After spending several years in this miserable condition under a load of guilt, it pleased a gracious and merciful God to deliver me from my sad estate. On the 3d of June 1802, I wept and prayed all day while engaged at my work, walking back and forth in my mill, frequently falling upon my knees in prayer, calling upon God for help, and vowed to serve him only, whatever might be the consequences. As I thus gave myself entirely to God, through faith, to serve him alone, I was permitted in the evening to have a glimpse of the saving mercy of his grace. By faith I saw God looking upon me, and while beholding his gracious countenance a stream of his love flowed into my soul, and I was certain that God was surely my friend, and I his accepted child. Yea, I was so quickened by the reception of his grace, and pervaded with such peaceful, sweet, and happy emotions, that I could not keep from praising my Redeemer for his great mercy and love. That night I could sleep without any cares, joyfully resting in Christ. The following morning there was a great change indeed. The heavens and the earth seemed new. The Scriptures had become a divinely quickening power, yea, to me all things appeared as if they

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<sup>54</sup> Record, Trinity Lutheran church, in *The Berks County Historical Society Archives*, Reading, Pennsylvania, Volume 1, p. 23. The name of George Miller is No. 16 on the list.

<sup>55</sup> *MLA*, p. 62f.

increased my happiness, for God had become my friend. Glory be to God on high for his love and mercy.”<sup>56</sup>

Miller's brother Solomon, was also converted and opened his home as a preaching place. Mrs. George Miller and her parents were never fully sympathetic with her husband's views. Albright, however, appointed George Miller as a leader of a class in his community and because of his effectiveness and unusual ability invited him to become an itinerant preacher in 1805. Miller admits that he had some doubts about his qualification for this calling<sup>57</sup> but worked under Albright and Walter and because of the results which he achieved in adding many to the church, soon came to believe beyond a doubt that he was truly called to the ministry.

Now Albright, Miller and Walter worked intensively during the next few years which were to be so important in the history of the new denomination. Walter, who was the most dramatic of them all, sometimes preached for two hours on the last judgment until sinners cried out all a-tremble, “God, be merciful, or I am lost.” Albright preached with less display but with a profundity unequalled by his co-laborers. It was the usual occurrence to find sinful people crying for mercy at the conclusion of his messages. Miller too, preached with great power so that some of his hearers, even his enemies who had come to disturb his meetings, fell on the ground as if dead, and then cried for mercy. All of these physical manifestations of conviction of sin and conversion run true to form and are to be found also in the other early American revivals.<sup>58</sup>

In their preparation for preaching, these early itinerants used the Bible, the catechisms, and the hymn book, which very frequently constituted their entire library. These books were usually carried in the saddle bags with the other essentials of a circuit rider. In these early years the converts to this new religious body came not only from the illiterate and, therefore, more emotional group, but from the intellectual group as well. In numerous cases an emotional quickening led members of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches to a more practical Christian life. Feeling that they owed the joy of their new experience to the Evangelical group, many of these persons became actively affiliated with that body.

## 24. THE SECOND CONFERENCE

The second conference of the newly formed Evangelical Church was held at the house of George Becker near Kleinfeltersville, Pennsylvania,

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187f.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>58</sup> Davenport, F. M., *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*.



in 1806, presumably in the latter part of the month of May.<sup>59</sup> George Miller states that he received an appointment on May 25th in 1806 and appointments were frequently made at such sessions. Tradition through the Becker family also says that this was the date of that conference. At the time of this meeting there were four ministers in the new church, Albright, Walter, Jameson and Miller, among whom the contributions for salaries were equally divided. Jameson was dissatisfied and although an additional allowance was granted him because of the small salaries he withdrew from the ministry. In consequence of the dispute about salaries, the conference of 1806 decided that no one shall be admitted to the ministry who will not be satisfied with his proportionate share of the salary. A new fund called the "Briefschafftsteuer" was created as a subsidiary or contingent fund. At first it was designed for the help of the preachers and the poor. Later all of the income was needed to provide only a barely living wage for the preachers. Shortly after 1836 the fund was discontinued.

The Conference of 1806 in addition to granting licenses to the itinerant or travelling preachers, created the office of "local preacher," and granted licenses to Charles Bisse, Solomon Miller, and Jacob Phillips as the first incumbents of this office. These local preachers supported themselves and their families and although they did not travel over the circuits, they did preach in their local communities. Their function was very much like that of a licensed exhorter. This conference also resolved that similar conferences should be held annually.

During the summer of 1806 the labors of the itinerant and local preachers met with remarkable success. The pitifully small results of the first years were far surpassed. The seed which had been sown took root in the various communities and a good harvest resulted. Miller had won over eighty converts in two months. He was conducting a "big meeting" at the home of Martin Dreisbach, Sr., in Buffalo Valley when Albright and Walter came to his assistance. As they fellowshipped together during those days they shared their experiences and came to realize, as never before, the necessity of being bound together more closely, if their rapidly increasing work was to prosper. Here they renewed their covenant and pledged their faith to another on October 27, 1806 in a written contract, of which Miller says:

"Albright, Walter and myself renewed, on the 27th of October, our covenant still more earnestly to prosecute the work of the Lord, by a short, written contract. Brother Albright admonished and encouraged us to continue our work courageously and fearlessly, and lead as many sinners to Christ as possible."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> *SW*, p. 78f and *SA*, p. 22.

<sup>60</sup> *MLA*, p. 116.

At the close of that year George Miller reported more than one hundred conversions in eight months. The year 1806 had begun with one hundred and twenty members and four itinerant preachers, Albright, an elder; Walter, a deacon; Jameson and Miller, probationers. By the Conference of 1807 there were to be almost twice this number of members in the church. The remarkable success of George Miller during his few years of active service gave a tremendous impetus to the development of the new group. Beyond Miller's success on the new circuit, splendid success was shown on the old circuit near Mühlbach, Tulpehocken, the Swamp, and Packston (Paxtang) near Harrisburg. Classes were formed in these places to stabilize the work.

The beginning of one of these classes near Mühlbach, now Kleinfeltersville, is described in a most interesting fashion in a contemporary document found among the posthumous papers of George Becker one of the first converts there. Becker tells of the visit of Albright and Miller in 1805 and that later Walter and others, too, preached in his home. Somewhat unusual is the fact that in several of these homes the wives were much more hesitant than their husbands in seeking for this new religious experience. The result of the visits of these preachers was that Frederick, George and Samuel Becker, Jacob Lesher and John Leffler, their families and others, some of whom were prominent in the established churches in the vicinity, gave themselves over entirely to the new evangelistic group. Class meetings were held very regularly and with remarkable results in the spiritual development of the members and in the winning of new adherents to the cause.

This document is the only extant reference to the fact that Albright issued an exhorter's license, probably very similar to the one which he had received from the Methodists some years before. George Becker wrote that Albright gave to John Leffler the following document:

"Now I give to John Leffler the right to hold class meetings and exhort, so long as he conducts himself properly."

(Signed) JACOB ALBRIGHT

It is not unusual that such a document should be found among the early Evangelicals for they patterned very closely after the Methodist system. This exhorter's license bears the very definite mark of these early pious men, "so long as he conducts himself properly." How much that sounds like the closing phrase on the license issued to Dreisbach, "if he conducts himself as is meet according to the Word of God." These are not the empty phrases of external piety, but the sincere expressions of men who sought to keep themselves and all their co-laborers above reproach in a time when integrity of character was scoffed at by so many nominal church members. They were the hallmark of those who belonged to the evangelical groups.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORGANIZATION OF THE DENOMINATION

#### 25. THE FIRST REGULAR CONFERENCE

In keeping with their decision at the Conference of 1806, to hold a conference annually, the leaders of the Evangelical Church, then called "The Albright People," held their first official annual gathering on November 13-15, 1807 at the home of Samuel Becker at Mühlbach, then in Dauphin County and now in Lebanon County. In January of that year Albright had changed the preachers, sending Miller to the old, and Walter to the new circuit. On Pentecost in April 1807, all the ministers of the group attended a general meeting at Penn's Valley in Centre County. At this gathering the youthful John Dreisbach was given a license as a local preacher and during the remainder of the year he assisted the regular ministers. From the Conference of 1807 all such matters were to be discussed and decided at the regular annual session.<sup>1</sup>

The Samuel Becker at whose home the first regular conference of the Evangelical Church was held, was a grandson of Peter Becker who with many other Anabaptists had fled from their homeland to find in the new world a place to worship according to the dictates of their consciences. Peter Becker was the official baptizer of the group in the Mühlbach region,<sup>2</sup> and in 1724 baptized Conrad Beissel<sup>3</sup> who later founded the Seventh Day Baptist Communistic Society at the Cloister near Ephrata. Recently the old "mourners' bench" used in the early services at this home was removed to the Museum of the Historical Society of the Evangelical Church in Reading, Pennsylvania.

The conference was constituted of all the officials of the Evangelical Church, five itinerant ministers, three local preachers and twenty class leaders and exhorters. These twenty-eight men legislated for the entire church and for the time being regarded themselves as the sole legislative body and responsible to care for all the needs of the church.

The five ministers present were Jacob Albright, John Walter, George Miller, John Dreisbach and Jacob Fry. The last two were preachers on trial. The local preachers included Charles Bisse, Solomon Miller and Jacob Phillips. From the group of twenty class leaders and ex-

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of the Conference of 1807.

<sup>2</sup> Rupp, I. D.—*History of Lancaster County*, p. 214.

<sup>3</sup> *Chronicon Ephratense*, translated by J. Max Hark, Lancaster, Pa., 1889, 288 pp.



horters Christopher Spangler of Centre County and John Thomas of Mifflin County were advanced to the order of local preachers. Alexander Jameson, who was still officially a minister of the church, was absent, having refrained from active service, however, since his dispute about salary distribution in 1806.

This group of comparatively unlearned men was faced with the great responsibility of organizing the work of "Die Albrecht's Leute" ("The Albright People") as they were commonly called. The Conference of 1803 had given Albright power to continue his work and organize it as he saw fit. This he did through the years but without any constitutional authority as such. It was necessary, therefore, that the work should be thoroughly organized at this meeting.

It must be seen clearly that Albright was never absolutely certain that a new church should result from his work and that of his associates. This is evident from the fact that the group adopted as the official name, "The Newly-Formed Methodist Conference."<sup>4</sup> Just before his death, Jacob Albright confided the following reassuring words to John Dreisbach, who was rapidly rising in influence and giving excellent promise of leadership:

"If it is God's will that you shall be a permanent association, He will also provide the elements necessary to success. He will raise up men from among you who will take up the burden I no longer can bear, and consummate the work. It is of God and in His hands, and He will provide."<sup>5</sup>

Dreisbach admitted that he was somewhat perplexed by Albright's statement, for in spite of this apparent uncertainty Albright "labored incessantly, according to the best of his abilities, as a faithful servant of Christ, and left the final issue with God."

A second act of importance accomplished by this conference was the drafting of an official form for the preachers' licenses. These licenses were to be issued annually. One of the very first licenses was issued to John Dreisbach and reads:

"Upon the authority of the Newly-Formed Methodist Conference, which has given John Dreisbach a good testimony, and is willing to receive him as a minister into our association; I the undersigned, give him the permission to serve in the office according to our regulation, and he is also appointed thereto, as a preacher for one year on trial, if he conducts himself as is meet according to the Word of God."

The 14th of November, 1807.

(Signed) JACOB ALBRIGHT

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<sup>4</sup> Attested in a posthumous paper of the Rev. John Kleinfelter.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in *OH*, p. 43.



ONLY KNOWN LICENSES GRANTED BY JACOB ALBRIGHT

Auf Bevollmächtigung der Neuformirten Methodisten Konferenz,  
die ein gutes Zeugniß gegeben, dem *Johannes Lindberg*  
und willens ist ihn aufzunehmen als *Freiwiler* --- in unsere  
Gemeinschaft; so gebe ich, der Unterschriebene, ihm die Erlaubniß  
das Amt nach unserer Ordnung zu bedienen, und auch dazu verord-  
net ist zu *Freiwiler auf ein Jahr*, so er sich gebührend nach  
Gottes Wort verhalten thut,

Den *14ten Decbr* 1807

*Jacob Albright*

Auf Bevollmächtigung der Neuformirten Methodisten Konferenz,  
die ein gutes Zeugniß gegeben, dem *Kamrad Lisar*  
und willens ist ihn aufzunehmen als *Freiwiler* --- in unsere  
Gemeinschaft; so gebe ich, der Unterschriebene, ihm die Erlaubniß  
das Amt nach unserer Ordnung zu bedienen, und auch dazu verord-  
net ist zu *Freiwiler auf ein Jahr*, so er sich gebührend nach  
Gottes Wort verhalten thut.

Den *22ten Novbr* 1807 *Jacob Albright*



Just a few days later on November 22, 1807, Jacob Albright issued the only extant license as a class-leader to Samuel Liesser. In this instance he used the same printed form but in the blank spaces provided wrote the name "class leader" in his own hand. These are the only original signatures of Jacob Albright known to exist.<sup>6</sup> Preachers in charge were also instructed to give written licenses to the appointed exhorters, a custom which Albright had begun as early as 1805.

It is only natural that in these important deliberations, this group should be influenced very much by the voice and judgment of their founder. At the suggestion of Albright, the Newly-Formed Methodist Conference adopted the episcopal form of government.<sup>7</sup> It is also quite obvious that the articles of faith were very similar to the "Thirty-nine Articles" of the Anglican communion and the rituals for baptism, marriage, burial and the sacraments were quite like those in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

The need for a *Discipline* or a book of Faith and Order was keenly felt by the men at this conference and Jacob Albright, their leader, was designated to draw up such a *Discipline* and have it printed. This he was never able to accomplish because of his untimely death the following spring.

At this conference session Jacob Albright was elected the first bishop<sup>8</sup> of the Evangelical Church. He was the unanimous choice of the body, and in being selected to this high position of supervision he was really only formally and officially honored with an authority which he had exercised from the beginning. His ability as a leader was recognized by all members of this conference even as his judgment had always been gladly received and followed. Since there was no disciplinary provision or constitutional law which provided for the officials of the denomination, it has been maintained<sup>9</sup> that Albright was not the first bishop of the church. The first election as a bishop under the *Discipline* fell to John Seybert, who was elected on March 27, 1839. However, in the spirit of organization and in reality Jacob Albright was the first bishop of the denomination.<sup>8</sup>

George Miller was advanced to the order of elder in the itinerancy, but his ordination was delayed for the time being. John Dreisbach and Jacob Frey were received as preachers on trial. The former was assigned

<sup>6</sup> See facsimiles of these licenses opposite this page.

<sup>7</sup> *MLA*, p. 129, "Auf Bruder Albrecht's Anrathen wurde die Bischofliche Regierungs-form angenommen."

<sup>8</sup> Dreisbach, John, *Journal*, "Although our Bishop, whom we elected half a year ago has departed, we have an infinitely greater Bishop—the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls." Also *MLA*, p. 128.

<sup>9</sup> Spreng, S. P.—*Life and Times of John Seybert*, Cleveland, Ohio, 1888, p. 199.

to assist Walter on the old circuit and the latter to assist Miller on the new circuit.

The membership of the church had increased to two hundred and twenty in this year, and there were many more over the widely scattered areas of the circuits, who adhered strongly to this group, but who were not ready to sever their old connections with other churches or to face the hardships and difficulties in their family and neighborhood relationships which might be incurred if they became open members of the group.

## 26. THE LAST DAYS OF ALBRIGHT

Following the permanent organization of the Evangelical Church at the Conference of 1807, Albright and his assistants worked with a new zeal in their evangelistic efforts and with even greater success than they had previously enjoyed. But Albright's health gradually began to fail.

A general meeting of semi-official character, called for Easter Day 1808, was held at the home of John Brobst, brother-in-law of George and Solomon Miller, in Albany Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania. All the ministers attended and for the last time were given their appointments by the founder, Jacob Albright. Walter and Frey were assigned to the old circuit and Miller and Dreisbach to the new.<sup>10</sup>

Although Albright travelled and preached with great difficulty, due to his weakened condition, he insisted on going with his brethren to another general meeting held just a week later at the home of Peter Raidabaugh at Linglestown, nine miles east of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Albright had first preached in this home only a few months before in the winter of 1807. Although he had encountered some opposition to his views about sin and the true Christian's constant struggle to be free from sin among these officials of the Lutheran Church, Albright through his sound reasoning and appeal to the Bible won them to be his loyal followers in thought and life. At this general meeting he was unable to preach because of the advanced stage of his illness, but managed, on Sunday, to sit for a short while on the preacher's stand in the barn. At the close of the meeting the ministers went directly to their appointments, but Albright set out toward his home, fifty miles away. Being so weak that he was unable to travel alone, Jacob Gleim and Abraham Walter accompanied Albright to Becker's home at Kleinfeltersville.<sup>11</sup> Each of them knew that he had seen his leader for the last time. Dreisbach has recorded that Albright's last words to him there were the lines, probably of a favorite German hymn:

"Resist and fight even unto blood;  
Enter by force the Kingdom of God."

<sup>10</sup> *SW*, p. 101.

<sup>11</sup> Contemporary manuscript of John Kleinfelter quoted *YH*(1), p. 88.

When Albright had covered about thirty miles of his journey he felt that he could not ride all the way to his home. Consequently he directed his horse toward Kleinfeltersville where he was welcomed by George Becker and his family. Upon his arrival Albright asked, "Have you my bed ready? I have come to die." His bed was ready for him. He was among friends who cared for him to the last.

Many of the early settlers kept a room especially for the travelling ministers where they might find quarters and rest no matter when they arrived. This room which Albright occupied is still pointed out to those who make the pilgrimage to the village of Kleinfeltersville and to the Becker homestead. Here Albright died on May 18, 1808, at the age of forty-nine years and seventeen days. Immediately upon his arrival at the Becker home, his family was notified of the impending end, but they arrived just a short time after his departure.<sup>12</sup>

Jacob Albright's widow spent her last days with her son David and his wife Mary on a portion of the original farm, and died in 1828, a member of the church her husband had founded.<sup>13</sup>

During his brief illness Albright was in close communion with God. Converts and friends of his held prayer meetings in his room and he joined his feeble voice with theirs in offering praise to God. To the last he insisted that he was very happy and especially grateful that he could die in the presence of Christian people. In his last hours his bedside was surrounded by friends who had come to pray. Of Albright's last days, George Miller writes:

"He retained the perfect use of his mental faculties to the last. A tranquility of mind, which only the consciousness of a well spent life of good works and noble deeds, and the assurance of eternal life and future blessedness can give, could be seen upon his countenance. He bade an affecting and affectionate farewell to those who were present, requesting them to unite with him in praising God, who would soon take his soul unto himself. He gratefully praised his Maker for his providential care over him, and for the guidance of his hand, through which he was led to experience peace and joy, and a living hope through faith in God. No one present remained unaffected. Everyone felt a strong desire to die as did this righteous man."<sup>14</sup>

Joyfully he bade his friends adieu. Ministers felt that they had lost a great leader and a close friend. Under the sacred influence of this hour, ministry and laity alike were moved to dedicate themselves more completely to God and his work. The opponents of Albright's work thought that now that the leader was gone the work would soon perish.

<sup>12</sup> Tradition through the Becker family to the author.

<sup>13</sup> Statement of Mary Raidabaugh Albright, her daughter-in-law.

<sup>14</sup> *MLA*, p. 30.



In this they were mistaken for the foundations of this spiritual movement were laid so deeply in a ministry to a fundamental, human need that it was not to be destroyed. Other God-called leaders took up the work where Albright laid it down and through the years have earnestly given themselves to its promotion.

Albright was buried in the Becker family cemetery on the edge of the village on May 20, 1808. Many of his friends and converts attended the funeral. John Walter preached the funeral sermon from the text, *Daniel 12:3*. Near this place the Albright Church was erected in his memory in 1850, which was however entirely rebuilt in 1860 because of faulty construction in the beginning. On his tombstone are inscribed the words, which translated from the German, read:

"In memory of the Evangelical preacher, Jacob Albright, born May 1, 1759, and died May 18, 1808, aged 49 years and 17 days. His remains rest under this stone. 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.' " <sup>15</sup>

Albright's best biographer, George Miller, pays many beautiful tributes to the founder of the Evangelical Church.

"This Godly man," he writes, "had preached the Gospel nearly twelve years. The immediate fruit of his labor was the conversion of three hundred souls, who were diligently striving to serve God, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. . . . His public prayers and sermons were powerful, penetrating, and convincing, although delivered in a simple manner, not with enticing words of human wisdom, but he spake as one moved by the Holy Ghost, the power of which manifested itself in all his addresses. Love for his fellowmen seemed to pervade him; he prayed for his enemies and his persecutors, and neglected no opportunity to promote their salvation, and to lead them into the path of truth. Even his gestures and movements often revealed the presence of God's spirit within him, so that his hearers were deeply affected, without the utterance of many words on his part; and there were times when he entirely forgot his body and himself, and such a degree of inspiration was upon him that he moved from the desk into the middle of the room, without perceiving it himself. When these strong emotions filled his soul, wonderful expressions of joy were seen in his countenance, and praises to God flowed from his lips, and his whole being was in motion. Whatever comes from the heart reaches the heart, and hence his hearers were usually so touched that the seed of the Word did not fall among thorns, but bore precious fruit. He discharged his ministerial duties with earnestness and punctuality; he never neglected to attend an appointed meeting, if the condition of his health would in any wise permit him to be there, nor did he merely discharge his ministerial duties as such, but fulfilled

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<sup>15</sup> Psalms 116: 15.

them with delight and joy. He was diligent in cultivating and promoting spiritual union with and among his brethren; watching with paternal solicitude over their conduct, himself being a good example, endeavoring to the best of his ability to promote true holiness of heart among them."<sup>16</sup>

When the way of his colleagues fell into hard places, Albright always tried to share their feelings as in the case of the conference with Walter and Miller on October 27, 1806 when he pledged with them to go forth bravely and courageously to win as many sinners as possible.<sup>17</sup>

He was just as much concerned about every one of his co-laborers as he was about himself and his own success. When George Miller during the first year of his ministry had become greatly discouraged because of ill health, and had planned to abandon the work entirely, Albright was at a distant appointment, but feeling that something was not well with Miller, made a special trip and came unexpectedly upon his colleague. After he had drawn from Miller a statement of his difficulties, they went together into the seclusion and solitude of a nearby grove. Here Albright admonished Miller, then prayed for him earnestly, and Miller was so firmly reestablished in his faith and calling that he never faltered again.<sup>18</sup>

That Albright constantly sought strength and courage for his strenuous life in rigorous self-discipline is beautifully attested in an incident which occurred on a cold, snowy day in the latter part of 1805. Albright stopped three miles southwest of Lebanon at the home of Philip Breitenstein, a friend and former neighbor who had lived formerly at Adamstown near Albright's home. Due to inclement weather the friends were unable to gather for a service, so Albright prepared for his further journey. When the family sat down to dinner, Albright said, "Today is my fasting day, be so kind and excuse me." After dinner, however, he changed his mind and said, "I think I ought to eat a little after all, since I am not well and have some distance to travel and the weather is unpleasant."<sup>19</sup> We have here then a definite evidence that Albright continued the practice of fasting and self-discipline even to the last years of his declining health. It is a great satisfaction to know, too, and it was so characteristic of his well organized manner of life, that he never allowed even a discipline to become his master but, as in this instance, held discipline subject to moderation and good judgment and used it only for greater efficiency and spiritual gain.

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<sup>16</sup> *MLA*, p. 31ff.

<sup>17</sup> *Cf.* Chapter III, note 60.

<sup>18</sup> *MLA*, p. 103.

<sup>19</sup> *YA*, p. 94f.

Albright always urged his co-workers to be polite, neat in appearance, and very studious. He advised the keeping of journals for recording official acts, experiences, and observations. The journals of Albright, Miller, Dreisbach and Seybert have been of inestimable value. Part of Albright's and most of Miller's journals are preserved in George Miller's work *Albrecht und Miller*, which forms so large a basis of this study. Seybert's *Journal* and a part of Dreisbach's journal are preserved at Naperville, Illinois.

John Dreisbach spent the first year of his ministry in travel with Albright, and profited greatly by acquiring many of Albright's orderly habits and much of his fine manner of conduct in public services as well as in private life. Albright seemed to take unusual personal interest in young Dreisbach, and guided and encouraged him even as a father would a son. He instructed him in the proper divisions of texts and urged him to be very careful of his language, especially to avoid the use of the Pennsylvania German dialect in his preaching. Albright himself was a good example of all that he sought to teach. Of this valuable experience Dreisbach wrote:

"I derived a great benefit from his paternal instruction and pious example, as well as from his fervent prayers, childlike confidence in God, and his humble resignation to His Holy Will. All this made a deep impression on my mind, and was highly useful to me afterward in my calling as a Christian and minister of the Gospel. O, what a blessing it is for a young minister to have such a guide and instructor!"<sup>20</sup>

At the close of Albright's life the opposition to his work had reached its climax. One of the clergymen, who opposed his type of work, said, "If it were lawful, I would just as soon shoot a 'straweler' preacher as I would a mad dog." Another of his kind announced that if the militia were called out to exterminate these people, he would be one of the first to shoulder his musket against them.<sup>21</sup> Once on a trip from Reading to Womelsdorf, Albright's life was endangered when repairmen on the turnpike violently stoned him.

"All persecutions and sufferings," however, writes his biographer Miller, "which he had to endure for the sake of the Gospel, he bore with patience, opposing them with nothing but meekness, and counting them but little; because he considered the grace which God had bestowed upon him, as so great a blessing, that compared with it, all sufferings of this life were nothing. He, therefore, remained steadfast in the doctrine of Christ, to call sinners to repentance, and to urge them to believe in Christ, and to edify and exhort the believers to pursue

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<sup>20</sup> Quoted in *OH*, p. 37.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted in *OH*, p. 47.



holiness. Thus he was a chosen instrument in the hand of God to revive true Godliness, and God's grace was evidently with him. None of his adversaries were able to harm him in the least, although they strove to do so with all their might; for his uniform aim in his whole conduct was to promote the honor and glory of God. This was a firm and unchangeable principle with him, guiding all his actions, and which he inculcated in all his followers. Therefore he gave to his brethren who labored with him in the vineyard of the Lord, when he saw them assembled for the last time in this life, the following good advice: 'In all you do or intend to do, let it be your aim to promote the honor and glory of God, and to promulgate and exalt the operations of his grace, both in your own hearts and among your brethren and sisters; and be faithful co-workers with them in the path which the Lord has shown unto you, and he will grant you his blessing.' " <sup>22</sup>

In spite of the fact that in all his official duties, Albright was diligent and scrupulously exact, he was never autocratic or arbitrary. In the face of difficult problems he invariably consulted his preachers, leaders, and most experienced members. Especially was this true when he wanted to make new rules or regulations for the best interests of the entire Society.

John Dreisbach describes Albright as a cheerful and amiable preacher, yet very discreet and thoughtful. Slowly he began his sermons with pleasant and moderate tone of voice and by the end of his introduction his speech flowed freely as a stream. He was an early riser, studied the Scriptures diligently, and frequently retired with his Bible into a grove or secluded spot in the open for meditation and prayer. His deeply mystical nature is shown in his delight in such regular devotional habits after which he frequently walked alone humming or singing a tune softly as he continued his meditation and further communion with God amid the beauties of nature.

Albright always kept his clothing neat and tidy and urged his fellow ministers to do likewise. He was punctual, industrious, economical, and absolutely honest. He loved order and even when he left a bedroom in the morning it was always in neat arrangement. So, too, he loved order in the church. When some of his followers resorted to erratic emotional expression, he called them to order and to what he considered true religious conduct. Withal he was modest and unassuming, although when once he was assured of the rightness of a position, nothing, and no one could move him from it. He loved children very much, and never spoke harshly or insultingly to any one, or of any one, not even to or of his most bitter enemies.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *MLA*, pp. 33 and 34.

<sup>23</sup> Personal traits gleaned through traditions.

## 27. FROM ALBRIGHT'S DEATH TO THE CONFERENCE OF 1809

Without the leadership of Albright, the ministers felt that the work would suffer, for there seemed to be no one to take his place. John Walter was a powerful preacher, but was not specially gifted with executive ability. Fortunately George Miller was well equipped for the task, and filled the gap even if it was for only a brief period and declining health would compel him to retire. His incumbency was long enough to permit the youthful John Dreisbach, about nineteen years of age at Albright's death, to become acquainted with the work of the denomination and to develop into one of the strongest leaders the church has produced.

Due to his untimely death, Albright could not compile the Articles of Faith and the *Discipline* for his church. His brethren thought that George Miller should do this work, but he declined on the ground that he had received no official instructions to do so. He had difficulty in writing and had sufficient work to keep him very busy since he was in charge of the large Northampton Circuit. John Walter, however, now the oldest preacher in the denomination, insisted that Miller should compile these necessary documents and so in December 1808, Miller began to work on them.

Due to the death of Albright, no annual conference session was held in 1808. The ministers continued their work with intense vigor, inspired by the memory of their translated leader. John Dreisbach, who had been Miller's assistant on Northampton Circuit, assumed full charge of the circuit in order to enable Miller to complete his writings. Although his work was very difficult, Dreisbach succeeded in bringing with him to the Conference of 1809 two candidates for the ministry in the persons of Matthew Betz and Henry Niebel. Henry Niebel had been a school teacher and was preparing for the ministry of the Reformed Church. Miller continued diligently at his work, comparing many of the existing Rules of Faith and Order, Disciplines, and Catechisms and by the session of the Conference in 1809 had completed his work and had it ready for the press.

Persecution of the Evangelicals at the time of the death of the founder was at its worst. But here, as in other oppositions to Christianity, persecution actually spread the message and influence of this group. In the month of August, 1808, the youthful John Dreisbach and a young friend, Andrew Wolf, were going from Mühlbach to Jonestown, Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, where Dreisbach had an engagement to speak at the home of Peter Walter. Because the followers of Albright in this community feared the radical opponents in the other churches, they planned secretly for the meeting. They locked the doors and

bolted the windows from the inside, but evidently someone heard their singing, for it was not long after the service had begun until the rowdies broke through the door and attacked the Evangelicals. Dreisbach came down into the congregation to restore order, but was violently seized just as the lights were put out. The leaders of the gang shouted to their companions on the outside of the building, "Boys, open the door, we have got him!" "Give it to him; kill the priest," shouted back the mob. Dreisbach realizing his danger, raised himself up to his full height, and then dropped flat to the floor. Without lights his assailants soon began to beat one another and there was a terrible disturbance. Peter Walter, the owner of the home, and a few other Evangelicals ventured outside to see if they could help Dreisbach, not knowing that he was still on the inside. They were terribly beaten and Peter Walter bled freely from his mouth and nose.

Seven ring leaders of the Jonestown mobs were brought to justice and although they brought a counter suit against Dreisbach and his followers, they were found guilty. Then the Evangelicals remitted the fines to their assailants to show that it was not malice but simply a desire for justice which had prompted the suit.<sup>24</sup> Outrages in the Jonestown vicinity, although they did continue for the next twenty years, were much fewer thereafter.

One of the jurors who heard the case in the court at Harrisburg was Philip Breitenstein of Lebanon, Pennsylvania. He had previously heard Albright preach and had opened his home as a preaching place for the Evangelicals. By the conduct of these Christians in the court room he was finally convinced that he, too, should join their ranks. Later he became a local preacher in the denomination.

John Franklin Crowell, a liberal benefactor of Albright College, in a letter before his death, described another incident which occurred at the home of his great grand-parents, a Mr. and Mrs. Ziegler in York County. When the ruffians from the nearby village of Dover arrived the religious service had already begun in that portion of the house given over to weaving. Mrs. Ziegler answered the knock on the door only to discover that these men had come to break up the meeting. They had already begun to push their way into the house where Mrs. Ziegler, a small but matronly woman of splendid character and presence, raised her hand, stayed the crowd saying that no power could withstand the work of God's people engaged in worship. The crowd vanished and there was no more trouble.

## 28. THE ADOPTION OF THE DISCIPLINE

The first conference since the death of Albright and in reality the second regular conference of the Evangelical Church was held in April,

<sup>24</sup> *OH*, p. 48ff.



1809, at the home of the Rev. George Miller<sup>25</sup> in Albany Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania. George Miller, John Walter, John Dreisbach, and John Erb were the regular ministers in attendance. At this session Matthew Betz and Henry Niebel were received into the itinerancy on probation. Miller was chosen as chairman and Dreisbach as the secretary of the conference. John Walter and John Dreisbach were voted elder's orders but their ordination was temporarily deferred. Because of his ill health, George Miller was not assigned to a field of labor but was requested to travel and preach whenever he could and, in addition, to prepare devotional material for circulation among the members of the church.

John Walter and John Erb were stationed on the Northumberland Circuit and John Dreisbach, Matthew Betz, and Henry Niebel on the Schuylkill Circuit. The Franklin Circuit was served irregularly. The conference adopted the name, "The So-Called Albright's People," which incorporated the name naturally used by others to designate them. This acceptance is an indication that the members of this group were still not entirely certain that they should be a new denomination. Walter was allowed \$42.72 out of the subsidiary fund to purchase a horse.

The *Articles of Faith and the Book of Discipline* compiled by George Miller were accepted and adopted<sup>26</sup> and he was ordered to have it printed at his own expense. John Dreisbach was also instructed to publish a *Catechism* which he had translated from the English, the only known copy of which is in the Library of the Evangelical Historical Society in Reading, Pennsylvania. These decisions naturally lead one to the conclusion that the early leaders of the Evangelical Church were impressed with the value of education in the preparation for Christian living.

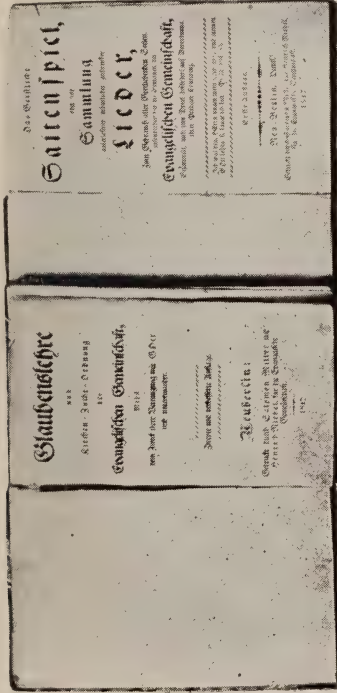
One of the local preachers, Jacob Phillips, died during the year. However, since the last conference the number of the church membership was nearly doubled, now totalling 426.

During the summer of 1809 a general meeting, attended by all the preachers, was held at the home of Henry Eby, near Lebanon, Pennsylvania. George Miller's *Discipline* had been printed and was ready for distribution. Miller was much pleased that his work was so well received. He had been ordered to have the work printed at his own expense but apparently sold so many copies "that the expenses were easily defrayed." Two other very important results were achieved by

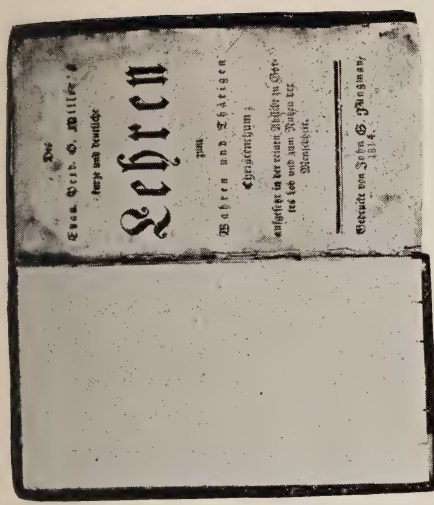
<sup>25</sup> *SW*, p. 102, says the conference was held in the home of John Brobst, Miller's brother-in-law. These men lived in the same home. *OH*, p. 51, calls the meeting place the home of George Miller.

<sup>26</sup> There are only very slight differences between the *Articles of Faith* in this *Discipline* and those in the German Edition of the Methodist *Discipline* printed in Lancaster, Pa., in 1808.

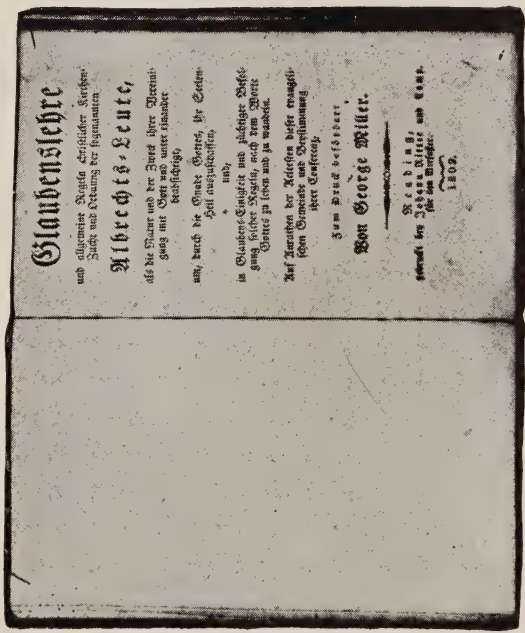
# EARLY EVANGELICAL BOOKS



*Glaubenslehre (Second Discipline), New Berlin, 1817, and  
Das Geistliche Sittenspiel, New Berlin, 1817*



*Lehren zum Wahren und Thätigen Christenthum, by George Miller, Reading, Pa., 1814*

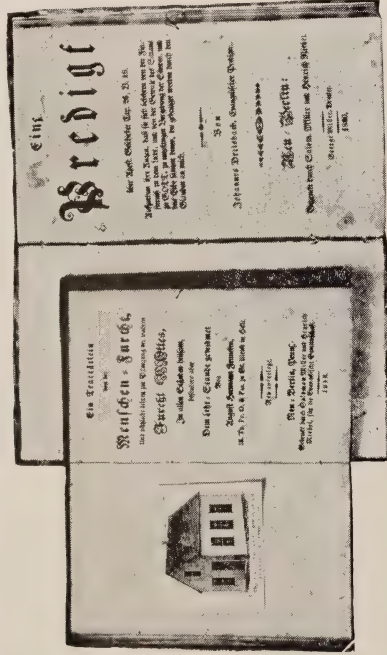


*Glaubenslehre (First Discipline), Reading, 1809*

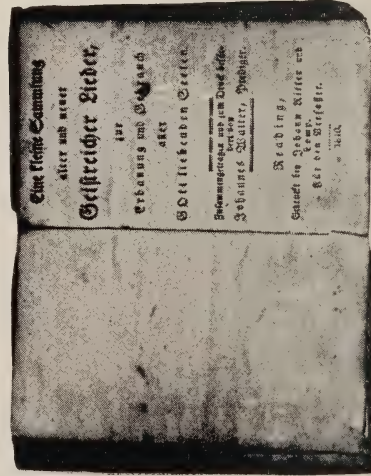


*Das Neue Testament, New Berlin, 1819*

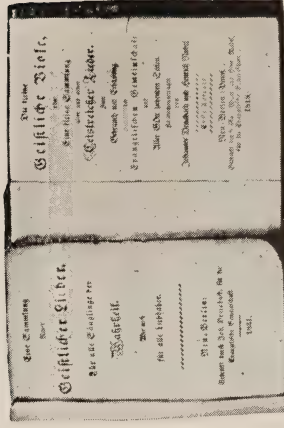
# EARLY EVANGELICAL BOOKS



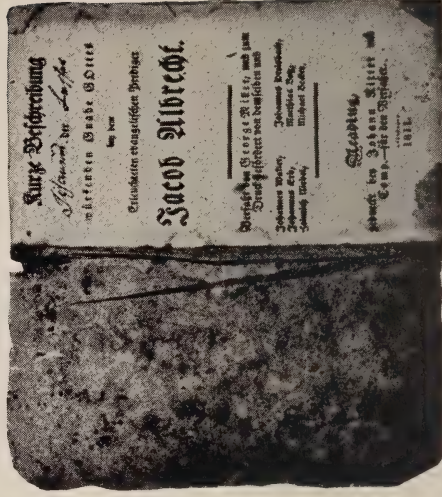
August H. Franke's *Menschen-Furcht*, New Berlin, 1818  
and *Eine Predigt* (A Sermon) by John Dreisbach,  
New Berlin, 1820



*Geistliche Lieder* (Spiritual Songs) by  
John Walter, Reading, Pa., 1810



*Geistliche Lieder* (Spiritual Songs)  
by John Dreisbach and Daniel Bertolet,  
New Berlin, 1821, and *Die Geistliche  
Viole* (Spiritual Lyre), New Berlin,  
1818



*Geistliche Lieder* (Spiritual Songs) by Jacob Albrecht by George Miller



the appearance of this first *Discipline*. Until the appearance of these regulations apparently there had been some difference of opinion among the ministers as to the correct manner of conducting conferences, and at times these differences led to unprofitable discussions. But after the rules appeared, Miller wrote, "our conferences were like ante-chambers of heaven by which all of us were edified and profited." The *Discipline* also encouraged the first members to resolve anew "to continue their union with God and among themselves." Before any printed book of faith and order appeared, the ministers had some difficulty in identifying themselves and their new church among strangers, but after 1809, Miller writes, "many others were induced to unite with us and work out their soul's salvation, according to this regulation."<sup>31</sup> The following translation of the title page shows clearly that this book was intended for this latter purpose:

"Doctrines of Faith, and General Rules of Christian Church Discipline and Order of the so-called Albright's People, intending to show the purpose of their union with God, and among themselves, in order to work out their soul's salvation, through the grace of God, and in the unity of faith and chaste obedience to such rules, to live and to walk according to the Word of God. Upon the advice of the Elders of this Evangelical Community, and the instruction of the Conference. Published by George Miller, Reading. Printed for the Author by John Ritter and Company, 1809."

A very important event of this gathering was the ordination of George Miller, John Walter and John Dreisbach, to the office of elder. Orwig,<sup>27</sup> Stapleton,<sup>28</sup> and Yeakel<sup>29</sup> call this the first formal ordination in the new denomination, although Yeakel<sup>30</sup> later admits that it is really the second ordination.

The first formal ordination was that of Jacob Albright which was also a lay ordination and equally as important as this ordination. It is true, however, that the second ordination was performed after the adoption of a set of disciplinary rules.

The winter of 1809 and 1810 was very fruitful in the number and personal worth of the new converts to the movement. During that year five new classes were formed and among the numerous converts were Lewis Henky and George Lanz of Tulpehocken, David Thomas and John Rueply (Ripley) of Lancaster County, and David Boyer and John Seybert of Manheim, Lancaster County, all of whom became ministers. Thomas, Boyer and Seybert became regular itinerants. In

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<sup>27</sup> *OH*, p. 52.

<sup>28</sup> *SW*, p. 77.

<sup>29</sup> *YA*, p. 285.

<sup>30</sup> *YH*(1), p. 104.

<sup>31</sup> *OH*, p. 58f.

Oley, Berks County, Daniel Bertolet was converted and became a power for the church in his community. Many of his poems and letters from leading laymen and clergymen of the early church are preserved among the valuable papers of the Historical Society of the Evangelical Church in Reading, Pennsylvania.

While Seybert's conversion did not actually take place until early in the following conference year, he had been brought under the influence of the preaching of the Rev. Matthew Betz just before the Spring Conference in 1810. Since Seybert later became such an important leader of the church and since his experience was somewhat typical of many of the conversions of the period, it will be profitable to examine his own description of his experience.

John Seybert lost his father before he was fifteen years of age and when he was but sixteen his mother left him and his younger brother, David, to become a member of the millennial cult of George Rapp which founded the Harmony Colony at Harmony, Pennsylvania, and later at Economy, Pennsylvania. John was not a member of any church, but believed in God and in the Bible, and in general was a good character. The Harmonists tried to win him, urging him to come and join his mother in their cult, but young Seybert could not be persuaded. In holding aloof, however, he found no peace of mind and no relief from the religious difficulties into which he had fallen. He says that for three years his life was "a barren waste and a howling wilderness." With a friend he came into a meeting when the Rev. Matthew Betz was preaching and was finally convinced of the way of life he must follow. He sat on a bench near the preacher and already in the pastoral prayer he felt that Betz had gotten a master hold on his heart. He admitted that during the prayer he had shuddered convulsively and that new and strange feelings possessed his soul. In his *Journal*, Seybert wrote of the experience:

"After prayer the preacher rose, stood behind the table, read a text of Scripture, and began to preach. Before he was half way through, I was thoroughly convinced that he was a true servant of Jesus Christ. I was also convinced that I was no Christian, but a sinner who richly deserved the wrath of God. Then and there I received a wound from the sword of the Spirit, and a stroke from the hammer of the Word, from which I never recovered, and the effects of which will continue with me through all eternity. Praise the Lord for it." <sup>32</sup>

The next morning Seybert rose early and after careful and cool deliberation decided to consecrate himself wholly to the Lord, soul and body, and with all that he had, for time and for eternity. This calm and deliberate decision however brought no immediate peace to his soul.

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<sup>32</sup> Quoted in Spreng, S. P., *op. cit.*, p. 26ff.

For several months he struggled, spending much time in prayer for the forgiveness of his sins, but in spite of his efforts, he seemed to grow more depressed. On June 21st he says that he rose with a heavier burden than ever. That morning he literally cried as he prayed on the way to the well, "God be merciful to me, a sinner, for Jesus' sake." His answer was not long deferred. As he bathed his face in the clear cool water he felt his heavy burden disappear and knew definitely that he was a new creature in Christ Jesus.

"There by that well," wrote Seybert, "the Lord converted me deep into eternal life (tief ins ewige Leben hinein bekehrt); there he blessed me for the first time, and I will not forget it to all eternity. My heavy load was suddenly gone, my sorrowful spirit was made instantly happy, and I was full of the Holy Ghost, Hallelujah."<sup>33</sup>

This experience of John Seybert was so distinctly and emotionally vivid, so colorful and real that for the remainder of his life it was for him completely satisfying and morally and religiously controlling. He and many like him were overcome with grief through their feeling of the guilt of sin, but were lifted out of their lower and weaker selves by the power of God through Jesus Christ, to whom they dedicated themselves for Christian living and service.

## 29. EXPANSION THROUGH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA

The third regular conference of the followers of Jacob Albright was held April 18 to 20, 1810, in the home of George Becker at Mühlbach. Miller and Dreisbach respectively were again chosen as the chairman and secretary of the conference. Every meeting of the conference session was opened and closed with prayer. The church had increased to a membership of 528 and there were now seven itinerant and ten local preachers. Michael Becker and David Yerlitz were received into the itinerancy on probation and John Erb and Matthew Betz were ordained deacons. Schuylkill and Lancaster Circuit was assigned to John Walter, Henry Niebel and Michael Becker, while Dreisbach and David Yerlitz were assigned the Northumberland Circuit. John Erb and Matthew Betz were sent out as preachers at large, missionaries in reality, to establish preaching places and classes in York, Adams, Cumberland, and Franklin Counties. This was the beginning of the Franklin Circuit which had been served only very irregularly before. At the suggestion of the conference, Walter and Dreisbach exchanged appointments occasionally with Erb and Betz. Because of his impaired health, George Miller was again invited to preach and write and visit members according to his ability and discretion.

John Walter had composed some hymns on his preaching tours and

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*



at this session received permission to publish them in a small hymn book. The little book soon took the place of the German Lutheran and Reformed hymnals which the Evangelicals had been using. Walter's German hymn book appeared in 1810 under the title, (translated) "*A Small Collection of Spiritual Hymns, old and new*, compiled and published by John Walter, minister, Reading, printed by John Ritter and Company for the Author, 1810."

This book of seventy-two pages contained fifty-six devotional hymns especially appropriate for use at camp meetings or prayer meetings in the early classes. It was probably the first of its kind to be written specifically for German people in America. The work contains Walter's translation of Isaac Watts' hymn "My God, the spring of all my joys," etc. ("Mein Gott, du Brunnen aller Freud"), also a number of hymns from his own hand which were received so kindly and so highly esteemed that almost all of them were included in the next hymnals, *Das Geistliche Saitenspiel*, which appeared in 1817 and *Die Kleine Geistliche Viole* which appeared in 1818. Among Walter's best known hymns were his "Kommt, Brüder, kommt, wir, eilen fort—" and "Wer will mit uns nach Zion gehen?", which appeared not only in later hymn books of the Evangelical Church but were also printed more widely in other hymnals. A very interesting account of the circumstances under which Walter wrote the first of these hymns has been preserved through the Rev. Joseph Saylor. Saylor, the presiding elder of the Salem District in 1833, traveled from Morrison's Cove in Bedford County across the Allegheny mountains to his next appointment in Cambria County, with the aged George Kring who was converted under Albright in 1805. On the difficult journey to Kring's home where the service was to be conducted, Kring told Saylor of his very similar journey with John Walter many years before when in the heart of winter he piloted him across the Alleghenies. A heavy snow had fallen and Kring, having a stronger horse, rode some distance in advance and broke a path. At one point in the trip Walter told Kring that he had composed a verse and repeated to him the first stanza of what is now believed to be "Kommt, Brüder, kommt, etc." Kring urged him to compose still other stanzas and when they reached their destination the entire work was carefully written.<sup>34</sup>

The Rev. Ammon Stapleton who is responsible for the preservation of this account has also translated several of Walter's verses quite literally as follows:

Come, brethren come, we'll journey on,  
To the New Jerusalem;  
Oh! see you not the golden gates,  
That just before you gleam?

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<sup>34</sup> SF, p. 188f.

*Chorus:*

In the rest, in the rest,  
 Oh! heaven's sweetest rest;  
 I'll wait for the day when my Saviour comes,  
 And then I'll go home to my rest.

Unto that goal direct your eyes,  
 Hold Jesus' faithful word,  
 Keep watchfulness and prayer in mind,  
 So the journey won't be hard.

Here is a mighty wilderness,  
 Through which we all must go,  
 Here taste the heavenly manna sweet,  
 Oh! then no murmur know.

George Miller was instructed to publish his biography of Albright at the expense of the itinerant ministers. The small denomination was very fortunate in its early history to have had a hymn writer like Walter, a doctrinal and devotional essayist like Miller, and a genius in administration like the youthful John Dreisbach.

It was also decided to hold two camp meetings during the year, the first in the history of the denomination. They were also the first German camp meetings to be held in America and perhaps in the world. The first one was held in May on the farm of Michael Maize, two miles below New Berlin in Union County, Pennsylvania, and the second one in October at George Miller's in Berks County, Pennsylvania. Camp meetings were a novelty then and caused so much curiosity that crowds flocked to the meeting places simply to see what it was all about. To the first camp meeting of the Evangelical Church, large numbers of the loyal members of the church came from regions as far as eighty miles distant. Here, as at the later rustic gatherings, the people came with their tents and camping equipment and stayed for a week to ten days, according to their interest and the success of the meetings. Most of the Christian people stayed until the impressive closing meeting of the camp. On the last night of the camp the entire group, clergy and laity, formed a large circle in the grove, and with hands joined, sang hymns of Christian fellowship. Where camp meetings are still continued they are conducted on a plan very similar to these first gatherings. Many of the curiosity seekers were impressed by the sermons, and became seekers and ere long were added to the membership of the group. Many came to mock and went away to pray. The fellowship enjoyed in these gatherings by the members of the new denomination made for a solidarity which the new body had never before enjoyed.

Splendid reports came from the new Franklin district. This year the evangelists had remarkable success for fourteen new classes were formed during the year and 200 members were added to the church. The success of these ministers was due largely to their constant prayer life, their simplicity and their plain interpretation of the gospel, and their constancy in proclaiming purity of heart and life as the only Christian standard. This approach was new to many of their hearers and attracted their attention and won them to the new denomination. This also brought down upon these circuit riders the vilifications and slanders of the established clergy, who were careless about the standards of living in their parishes, and who cared less about their own moral standards.

This year the itinerant ministers by action of the previous conference were compelled to make out a list of their income and expenses. For their services during the year until the Conference of 1810, these men received a cash salary of \$30.00 each.

This year the Briefschafftsteuer (subsidiary collection) amounted to \$30.80. This money was distributed among the five regular ministers and a widow. It is interesting to note that this denomination, which in later years has come to rank among the first of all Protestant churches in the average contributions for charitable purposes, very early in its history made provision for the poor and unfortunate. The original copy of the minutes of this conference, written by George Miller, with all the previous records of the denomination, was transcribed into a suitable record book by John Dreisbach on June 31, 1820, at the request of the Conference of 1819. In these minutes the name of the widow who shared in the Briefschafftsteuer is given as Maria Griffesin.<sup>35</sup> There was comparatively little income and it was the rule and practice to share whatever cash salary was received. Some of the men, who had given years of service, had to retire from their circuits in order to give their full time to supporting their families. Some of the bravest of them after making provision for their families came back to continue the work of the ministry. Lack of adequate support was one of the reasons why the work of the Evangelical Church was hindered during the next several decades, and it was a long time before there was something like an adequate salary so that the ministers could give all their time and strength to the promotion of the work of the church.

### 30. FIRST EFFORTS AT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The fourth regular conference of the Evangelical Church was held near Mühlbach, Heidelberg Township, Lebanon (then Dauphin) Coun-

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<sup>35</sup> Minutes of the Early Conferences in the hand of John Dreisbach; *BL*, p. 20.



ty, Pennsylvania, April 9 to 11, 1811.<sup>36</sup> Miller served again as chairman and Dreisbach as secretary. The session and daily meetings were opened with prayer and the conduct of the preachers and the condition of the circuits were examined. In those early conference sessions much time was spent in examining the moral and official conduct of the ministers, and there were frequent cases of dismissals, often when the charges were minor, for these pietists would not tolerate even the semblance of evil. A remnant of this practice is still in evidence when at the sessions of each annual conference, usually in executive session, the name of every minister on the roll is called and the opportunity is given to prefer charges or complaints against any minister as his name is called.

In Section II of the *Discipline* of 1817, dealing with the annual conference and its transactions, in answer to question three, it is specifically stated that before the election of a president for an annual conference session:

"Every member of the conference is at liberty, if he knows of any immoral deportment of any preacher, to make it known to the conference; yea he is not at liberty, he is bound to do so. For an immoral preacher shall not be accounted worthy to vote, much less shall he be elected as president."<sup>37</sup>

The rules for the annual conference also provide that after the selection of a president and secretary,

"Let them examine, whether all the preachers are unblameable in their life and deportment."<sup>38</sup>

Ministers were required by action of this annual conference to hold instruction for children regularly. This definite legislation would imply that some of the preachers either had grown lax in the matter of training the youth, for which the church had a strong emphasis from the beginning, or perhaps they had never even adopted this practice. This is the first official action taken by the denomination concerning the religious education of youth.

Fourteen new classes were formed during the year and the new Franklin Circuit was established as a regular field of labor. The work near Strassburg in York County continued to grow remarkably and extended even into Maryland. The ministers reported 72 conversions and 112 accessions bringing the membership to 740. There were at this time eight itinerant and twelve local preachers.

The highest salary received was \$45.56; the average \$29.33; the total \$283.00. The subsidiary collection of \$51.97 was again divided

<sup>36</sup> Copy of Minutes in Historical Society Collection, Reading, Pa.

<sup>37</sup> *Discipline*, 1817, p. 44f.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

among the ministers, Walter, Erb, Niebel, Becker and a poor man named Samuel Kupper.

Walter, Betz and Yerlitz were assigned to the Schuylkill Circuit; John Erb and Leonhart Zimmerman, the latter newly received on trial,<sup>39</sup> were appointed to the Northumberland Circuit; and Dreisbach, Niebel and Becker were named to serve the new Franklin Circuit.

In approval of the minutes the nine ministers signed their names, a custom which has been maintained in each conference to the present. This act meant much more than mere approval of the transactions. Invariably these signatures were affixed immediately beneath the closing resolution pledging the members to diligence and fidelity, and meant acquiescence in and obedience to the actions of the conference as in the sight of God.

Enthusiasm ran high among the clergy whose sole ambition was to lead men and women into a saving relation with God through Jesus Christ. Some of the zeal of these ministers is revealed in their correspondence.

"The fire is burning on the circuit, . . . . Our friends are in earnest. . . . During these meetings, fifteen souls were saved. We have received seventy persons into Church fellowship, . . . . The persecutors are very furious; they have cut my cloak and saddle into pieces, . . . . I think there will be five brethren who will start out by next Spring to preach the Gospel. Only continue earnestly in prayer and have faith in God, and he shall do great things for us."<sup>40</sup>

The statistics were very inaccurate, especially since the circuits had become so large that it was difficult to administer them efficiently. It is quite impossible, therefore, to determine the growth of the church and its influence merely by the numbers which were counted in their membership. This year was very fruitful in bringing in a number of men who later became ministers of the church. At Dover, Pennsylvania, the family of the Reformed minister, Ettinger, united with the church during this year. From this family, Adam, Benjamin, Jacob, and Jesse M. Ettinger became ministers, the first two, itinerants. Also John, Jacob and Adam Kleinfelter, John Freuh, John and Moses Dehoff, A. Buchmann, John Vandersal, and Joseph Dick, all of whom entered the ministry of the church, were converted and united with the church dur-

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<sup>39</sup> A preacher on trial or probation was a beginner who received his first license to preach and was invariably stationed with a mature preacher for several years. Even to the present preachers in the Evangelical Church serve a probationary period of at least two years after the granting of their first license and before their ordination as a deacon. During this period they are known as licentiates, or preachers-on-trial.

<sup>40</sup> Letter of John Erb to John Walter, January 14, 1812, quoted in *YH*(1), p. 112f.

ing this year. A successful camp meeting was held in May on the land of Philip Breidenstein, near Lebanon, Pennsylvania.

During this year George Miller devoted all his time to writing and by the fifth conference had completed his book (translated), *Practical Christianity*.

### 31. A PERPLEXING YEAR

The fifth conference of the Evangelical Church met at the home of Martin Dreisbach in Union County, Pennsylvania, April 2 and 3, 1812, with twelve itinerants present. This conference was confronted with some very serious problems. The gain in the membership during the preceding year was very small. Although 160 conversions were reported and 202 were received into the fellowship of the church, there was a net gain of only 21 in the membership which now totaled 761. This indicated an unusual loss and greatly perplexed the leaders of the church.

In all probability many members of the church had migrated westward and northward into western New York and lost contact with the church. The War of 1812 with England was at hand and naturally distracted the attention of many away from the church; but some of the losses were due to the lack of preparation and experience, and the exercise of poor judgment on the part of some of the younger men in the ministry. During the next conference year, in the interim of the sessions, this fact necessitated changes in the appointment of ministers.

The statistics may also have been at fault for this is the first year that the statistics are reported by circuits and appear in the original conference minutes. Since only the members on the three circuits are listed, it is easy to conclude that those who resided beyond these areas, and which may have been previously reported, were now omitted.

At this conference it was resolved to purchase lots and to erect dwelling houses for the families of poor itinerant preachers on the Schuylkill and the Northumberland Circuits. The project was entrusted to the supervision of the elders and trustees of these circuits with instructions that funds received should be applied equally on these circuits.

George Miller was instructed to devise a plan of episcopal church government, and to travel through the conference to the extent of his ability. The preachers received their annual licenses and reported to the conference the items of interest from each of their fields.

Three camp meetings were ordered to be held: one on Northumberland Circuit on May 22; another on Schuylkill Circuit on August 21; and a third on Franklin Circuit on September 24. The ministers were again advised to keep an accurate account of their finances and to try also to secure subscribers to the *Briefschafsteuer*. This subsidiary fund amounting to \$113.68, the largest sum collected in the first seven years



of the fund, was divided among the ministers and at least three needy members of the church. George Miller presented a treatise entitled, *Unterweisung zum Wahren und Thatigen Christenthum*,<sup>41</sup> which was submitted to several deacons and elders for inspection. The conference voted that in the event of their approval, it was to be published. Here is the first semblance of the modern book committee of the denomination which surveys all volumes published by, for, and with the approval of the denomination.

John Erb was ordained elder; Henry Niebel, a deacon; and Robert McCray, Michael Deibler, Abraham Huth, John Buckwalter and Frederick Shauer were accepted as preachers on trial. George Miller, John Walter and John Dreisbach were chosen to station the ministers and appointed them as follows: John Walter and D. Yerlitz to Franklin Circuit; John Erb and M. Deibler to Lancaster Circuit; M. Betz and M. Becker to York Circuit; H. Niebel and A. Huth to Schuylkill Circuit; L. Zimmerman, J. Buckwalter, and F. Shauer to Northumberland Circuit; and John Dreisbach and R. McCray to form a new circuit in the state of New York.

The signatures of all the men in the active ministry again were affixed to the minutes. It appears that these closing moments of the conference sessions were constantly becoming more impressive and significant. The closing paragraph of the minutes of this session was especially meaningful:

"Our conference was closed in the name of God, with united approval of the aforementioned ordinances, and in token of our willingness, and that we have obligated ourselves to obey God, and our order, in accordance with the word of God, we sign our names in the presence of God, and close with prayer in faith and confidence to God, who has thus united us in peace and love among ourselves, in hope that he who made us willing, will also enable us to do according to his good pleasure, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen!"<sup>42</sup>

Immediately after the conference session, John Dreisbach and his assistant, Robert McCray, set out for the state of New York, but found it inexpedient at that time to establish a circuit there. The idea had been suggested to the conference, very likely by Christian Wolfe, a local preacher of the denomination, who in 1807 had moved from the vicinity of Lewisburg to Seneca County, New York. This was the period of general emigration into the Indian lands of Western New York, after the six nations of Indians had surrendered their title to the lands of central and western New York by the Treaty of 1795. Wolfe had paved the way by 1812, to form a new circuit there among the

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<sup>41</sup>*Instruction in True and Practical Christianity.*

<sup>42</sup> Minutes of 1812.

German people, many of whom came from Pennsylvania; but Dreisbach and McCray felt that the opportunities were too few and the results too meagre to warrant such an undertaking. Consequently they returned to Pennsylvania and established a splendid work in the Triangle, between the northern and eastern branch of the Susquehanna River. There were so few German people in New York State and they were so far removed from the center of the denominational activities that these missionaries concluded that they would do more fruitful work farther south. By 1816, however, Wolfe had formed a few classes in New York, and the Rev. Jacob Kleinfelter was sent as minister by the Conference of 1816, and the work thus begun, became a permanent appointment.

It was very fortunate that Dreisbach and McCray did come back to Pennsylvania early in the year, for some of the younger ministers were not proving efficient; in some cases they were indiscreet and some readjustment in appointments was necessary. Northumberland Circuit, which had been entrusted to three comparatively new men, was put in charge of John Dreisbach, and McCray was sent to assist Henry Niebel on Schuylkill Circuit.

In their zeal to extend the work of the Evangelical Church, the leaders had urged certain young men with varying qualifications, but who gave evidence of sincerity, to enter the ranks of the ministry. It is hardly to be expected that a ministry recruited in this fashion would prove uniformly satisfactory or useful. The church, however, did not harbor or tolerate unworthy or unfaithful men in her ministry. Orwig very emphatically states the position of the early church on the matter of laxity in duties or conduct:

"Yet the Society was never guilty of the crime of sparing and suffering in its connection immoral or faithless preachers. The office of the keys of the kingdom of heaven was, at all times properly and rigidly exercised—offenders were tried and dealt with, according to their deserts, both preachers and laymen."<sup>43</sup>

There is also another side to this very delicate matter of strict discipline in those early years. Then, as now, of course, the slightest rumor regarding an irregularity of a clergyman immediately put him at a disadvantage and frequently left an entirely innocent man powerless to prove his innocence against the word of simply one other individual. Just such an instance occurred a few years after the writing of these strong words of policy into the minutes of the conference, and it is common knowledge that unscrupulous and ignorant persons tried time and again to hinder the work of these pious men by besmirching their good names. Even Albright suffered a great deal during his first years

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<sup>43</sup> *OH*, p. 63.

of preaching from "base and slanderous reports—which filled the ignorant multitude of luke-warm Christians with prejudice against the good man." <sup>44</sup> A woman of ill repute once slandered the Rev. John Breitenstein who consequently was arrested and served seven months in the Lebanon County jail because he persisted in declaring his innocence and would suffer anything to prove it. At the end of the seventh month his accuser was taken seriously ill and just before she died confessed that Breitenstein was entirely innocent. While his reputation was entirely cleared, it had meant nevertheless that seven months of his life were wasted, and a cloud had been cast over the work of the Evangelical preachers. More than that, it seems probable that Breitenstein never preached after that terrible experience for the conference records show that he served only six years in the active ministry. <sup>45</sup>

During the year 1812, John Dreisbach, who for six years had been working diligently, spending sleepless nights and periods of disciplining himself through fasting, suffered a severe nervous breakdown. This condition was aggravated by the careless criticism of some ministers, who insinuated that he had lost his zeal through a growing love of the world. This year had been especially strenuous for him, due to the extensive and fruitless trip through the State of New York. Fortunately, this young man of twenty-three years was able to get a fresh grip on himself and come out of his disability. This experience gave him a new insight, and with renewed physical strength and regained confidence of his fellows, he was becoming well equipped to assume the heavy duties of administration, which were about to fall on him. He describes his own experience:

"I had to pass through the most formidable struggles and trials. Being almost at the point of despair, I often feared that I should have to yield—that my frail bark would sink. 'My harp was tuned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.' Yet deliverance came, for which the Lord be praised! And these sore trials and struggles were followed by the most glorious victories. . . ." <sup>46</sup>

This year, emphasis was again laid upon the religious instruction of the young. Many of the men, because of large areas, and wide distribution of the families in each class, gave themselves more largely to preaching. Some were prejudiced against catechetical instruction followed by confirmation, as was the practice in some other churches. In their great concern for conversions, they failed to comply with the rule of the Conference of 1811, which had ordered the *Catechism*, written by John Dreisbach, to be printed and to be used by all the ministers in

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<sup>44</sup> *OH*, p. 20.

<sup>45</sup> Tradition from his family in Lebanon County.

<sup>46</sup> Dreisbach, John, *Journal*—quoted in *OH*, p. 65.



the training of the youth of the church.<sup>47</sup> Only a minority of the ministers used the catechetical method of instruction and some that did, simply held conversations about religious matters with the children.

The leaders of the church, however, were constantly insisting that catechetical instruction is an invaluable aid in helping the child develop a satisfactory religious life. John Erb was a staunch supporter of the catechetical method.

### 32. DEPLETED STAFF OF WORKERS

The difficulties of the year 1812-13 brought the sixth session of the Evangelical conference face to face with the problems of a static membership and a depleted ministry. This conference assembled at the home of Martin Dreisbach, located in Union County, Pennsylvania, April 21-23, 1813. George Miller presided for the last time and John Dreisbach recorded the minutes. Abraham Huth, John Buchwalter, and Michael Becker dropped from the ranks of the ministry and John Erb was compelled to retire because of feeble health. Henry Niebel and Matthew Betz were ordained elders; Leonhart Zimmerman and David Yerlitz, deacons. Abraham Buchmann, Adam Hennig, John Kleinfelter, Jacob Kleinfelter, John Stambach and John Walter, Jr., applied for admission as ministers and were received on probation. There were now fifteen preachers in active service, and a church membership of 796, a net increase of only thirty-five for the entire year. During the next five years the denomination was to enjoy a healthy growth which more than doubled its membership.

This year the highest amount of cash salary received by a travelling preacher was \$64.81. Miller, Walter, and Dreisbach were chosen again by the conference as the committee to appoint the ministers to their charges. John Walter, Jacob Kleinfelter and John Walter, Jr., were sent to Schuylkill Circuit; M. Betz, R. McCray, A. Buchmann and J. Stambach to Northumberland Circuit; H. Niebel and M. Deibler to Franklin Circuit; L. Zimmerman and F. Shauer to York Circuit; John Dreisbach and A. Hennig to form a new circuit; and D. Yerlitz and John Kleinfelter to form another new circuit.

With boundless zeal these two sets of dauntless missionaries travelled westward, Yerlitz and Kleinfelter to preach in Huntington and Bedford Counties, and Dreisbach and Hennig crossed the Alleghenies to labor in Somerset and the adjacent counties. It was this spirit of enterprise that spread the influence and widened the usefulness of the Evangelical Church and extended its borders and membership just at the time when people were moving westward in large numbers. The first group established the Bedford (later Centre) Circuit and Dreisbach and Hennig formed three fine classes across the Alleghenies which

<sup>47</sup> Minutes of 1811.

became the nucleus of Somerset Circuit. In the Conemaugh class of this circuit a fifteen year old lad, Jacob Paul, was chosen as the class leader.

A general meeting was held in the latter part of August at Jacob Kleinfelter's on York Circuit, and two camp meetings were conducted, one at Turkey Hill, Lancaster County and another at the home of Michael Maize in Union County.<sup>48</sup>

During this year Matthew Betz died very unexpectedly at the home of a Mr. Steffy near Boalsburg, Centre County. This was a great loss to the church for Betz was a mature minister and blessed with an excellent judgment. He had been used of God in winning John Seybert to Christ and the church, who later became the eminent bishop and tireless missionary of the denomination. Robert McCray left the ministry and returned to his trade as a cobbler in Lewisburg.

The Church suffered another great loss during this year, John Walter was compelled to retire because of declining health. This may have been one of the reasons that John Walter, Jr., too, after only one year in the active service retired from the active ministry. John Walter died five years later, December 3, 1818, a decade after the death of Albright, yet aged only 37 years, 3 months and 6 days. Like Albright, his leader, he literally burned himself out through incessant labors and undermined his health through severe exposure until the white plague stopped his labors and cut short his valuable career. He was buried in the private family burial plot located in a remote corner of his small farm in Lebanon County. On Sept. 11, 1930, a committee of the East Pennsylvania Conference, having found the inconspicuous angular stone which marked his grave, had his body removed to the cemetery in Ono, Lebanon County, along the main highway, Route 22. A beautiful memorial stone now fittingly marks the spot where his sacred remains lie.

The death of John Walter was keenly felt in many ways. In the estimation of his companions he was the strongest preacher the young church had after the death of his spiritual father, Jacob Albright. Time and again he had turned the tide in the crucial hour of a series of meetings and successfully brought many souls to a deep religious experience, where certain failure appeared to be imminent.

His type of preaching was deeply devotional, vivid, colorful and demonstrative. For this reason, in a series of meetings, or at a prolonged service Walter was usually scheduled for the closing sermon. He had the ability to hold the attention of his hearers. At a camp meeting in the apple orchard of Michael Becker near Hanover, York County, Pennsylvania, Albright had preached the first sermon of the afternoon and Walter was scheduled to bring the closing message of that afternoon. John Fleisher, one of his auditors, wrote that Walter

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<sup>48</sup> *OH*, p. 68.

preached about the awfulness of hell and so vividly described the fires of hell that a blind man ran out from the service shouting, "Fire! Fire!"<sup>49</sup>

The outstanding ability of these earliest preachers of the Evangelical Church made very difficult the problem of finding successors who could adequately carry on the work. The slow growth of the church in those closing years of the second decade was in a large measure due to the fact that the voices of Albright, Walter and Miller were gradually silenced and as yet no comparable prophets had arisen to shoulder their mantles and lift up their message. By the next conference session the number of active itinerants had been reduced to thirteen and never thereafter were the ranks of the ministry so depleted.

### 33. THE FIRST PRESIDING ELDER

For the third time in succession, the annual conference met, this time in its seventh regular session, April 13-15, 1814, at the home of Martin Dreisbach in Buffalo Valley, Union County, on the Northumberland Circuit, in Pennsylvania. For the first time John Dreisbach was chosen as the chairman of the conference and Henry Niebel as the secretary. Frederick Schauer, Abraham Buchmann, Adam Hennig and John Stam-bach were ordained as deacons and Thomas Bruer, Michael Walter, and Henry Stauffer were received on probation. It was decided to conduct camp meetings on Union, Bedford, York and Schuylkill Circuits. Although in poor health, George Miller, John Walter and John Erb promised to assist, according to their strength, on the circuits and at the camp meetings. The preachers received their licenses, and after the assignments were made, each gave to his successor information concerning the field he had served and the class books, in which were recorded the appointments and preaching places on the circuit, together with the names and location of the members, and officers of each appointment of the circuit.

The most important action taken at this conference session was the election of John Dreisbach, for a term of four years, as the first presiding elder of the Evangelical Church. Walter and Miller, because of age and ill health, were gradually retiring from active leadership, and the youthful Dreisbach assumed that leadership as rapidly as they relinquished it, a leadership for which he was well fitted and adequately prepared. Dreisbach had travelled a whole year with Jacob Albright, which in itself was an education; he had covered most of the territory of the church, which was highly informing; and he was thoroughly acquainted with the doctrines and polity of the church, which was quite essential. These wide experiences, together with the qualifications,

<sup>49</sup> Letter dated Armstrong Co., Pa., November 8, 1848, published in *CB*.



natural and acquired, which he possessed, marked him as the one logical person for this high office. In practice he was really a bishop, for at that time there was no higher office than his in the Evangelical Church, and no authority equal to that of the conference which elected him. Physically he was six feet tall, straight as an arrow and very impressive to look upon. He spoke German and English fluently; he had a very friendly spirit and was easily approached and he could be firm when necessary. Dreisbach was blessed with the gift of administration and he used it well. Since there was a large number of inexperienced men in the conference and since the duties in connection with the general meetings and camp meetings were becoming more and more detailed and administrative, it was very wise procedure to have elected a man like Dreisbach, a statesman, organizer and business man, to serve as the supervisor of all the work of the young church. There were now thirteen ministers and 1,016 members in the Evangelical Church, a net increase of 220 over the previous year, enabling the membership for the first time to pass the thousand mark.

Dreisbach's new office was not an easy one to fill. His conference area extended three hundred miles from east to west and one hundred miles from north to south and in order to hold conferences with the ministers and their local lay leaders quarterly, this area had to be traveled on horseback, four times each year.

The presiding eldership was not a new order in the ministry of the Evangelical Church conferred by an additional ordination; but rather a supervisory office exercised over all the preachers and all the circuits in the conference so that better work may be done and larger results achieved. The term of this office was four years. The *Discipline* of 1817 clearly states the special duties of presiding elders as follows:

- "1st. To travel in the bounds and district allotted him.
- 2nd. He is to have the superintendence of all the Societies within the bounds of his district, of the Class leaders, Exhorters, Local Preachers, Deacons and Elders, together with the Stewards and Trustees.
- 3rd. In case of emergency, he has the power between the intervals of the annual conferences, to change or transfer preachers, to receive preachers on trial, and to remove immoral ones, in the bounds of his district, agreeable to the direction of our Church Discipline.
- 4th. He is to take heed, not to be remiss in attending his appointed general or quarterly meetings, and in holding quarterly conferences, and according to his judgment he is to plan and conduct tent or camp meetings; and according to his ability, he shall work at preaching and exhorting, and always to be busy in leading his brethren in the ministry into holiness by his example.

- 5th. He is especially to take care that the rules of our Discipline in all its parts be diligently observed in the bounds of his district.
- 6th. He has the superintendence of the temporal and spiritual concerns of the whole Society, within the bounds of his district.
- 7th. He shall give the Bishop information of the state and condition of his district by letter during his absence; and when he is on his district he shall visit him where he may desire."<sup>50</sup>

Since there was no bishop in the Evangelical Church at this time, many of the duties of the bishop devolved on John Dreisbach, the presiding elder. At each annual conference session and on his visits to the circuits, he was asked to render decision on many questions which would ordinarily have been referred to a bishop. Since he really was not a bishop, Dreisbach asked George Miller and Henry Niebel to assist him in making the assignments to the preachers. The men were appointed to the circuits, as follows: Union, Henry Niebel and John Kleinfelter; Bedford, David Yerlitz and Michael Walter; Franklin, Frederick Shauer; York, John Stambach and Thomas Bruer; Lancaster, Leonhart Zimmerman and Henry Stauffer; Schuylkill, Adam Hennig; Somerset, Abraham Buchmann and Jacob Kleinfelter.

Dreisbach wrote that during the year he attended four camp meetings, fourteen general meetings and eight watch nights, in addition to his regular duties.<sup>51</sup> He expressed joy over the good success which attended each of these meetings. One must not be unmindful of the strong opposition and persecution which was in store for anyone who joined the Evangelical group. Orwig very clearly describes this situation:

"At that time the members and ministers were yet in the habit of attending camp and general meetings from great distances; and as such meetings were as yet something new to most of them, they took a deep interest in them, and were generally greatly edified and encouraged. Such meetings served not only to make the Society more rapidly known, but also to increase the contempt and hatred against it. The enemies of the cross circulated some of the most abominable lies, concerning these people, and the farther they spread, the more they increased, each one, through whose lips they passed, adding his part thereto. Thus it happened, that persons of some parts of the country, who knew these people merely from hearsay, dreaded their coming into their neighborhood as much as pestilence itself. In these their fears they generally were yet confirmed by their pastors, who represented the itinerants unto them as the false prophets and deceivers who were to come in the last times, and with all their might warned their congregations against them as the most dangerous men. In consequence

<sup>50</sup> *Discipline*, 1817, p. 53f.

<sup>51</sup> Journal quoted in *OH*, p. 72.

of this, many well disposed and even religious persons had become filled with prejudices against them, who afterward, upon closer acquaintance, acknowledged them as God's people, and subsequently joined the Society.

"What made the censure and opposition by the fickle crowd of nominal Christians and their lukewarm indolent pastors so general in those days, was the effects of the doctrine preached by our ministers, insisting on immediate conversion and a holy and godly life."<sup>52</sup>

The opposition which the young church met did little to hinder its progress. As always the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church. The opposition did more than stimulate zeal. It forced the less trained men to organize their powers and develop their skill in order to meet the criticisms heaped upon the movement. To compete with their vigorous opponents, these early preachers, some of whom were poorly trained, were forced to make themselves more effective as preachers and pastors than were those who attacked or belittled their work.

The pietistic and evangelistic emphasis which had been so characteristic in the life of their founder, Jacob Albright, became the dominant note in the preaching of the Evangelical ministers and has continued to be one of their distinguishing characteristics. The constant call for consistent Christian living gave them opportunity and while the number of members in the Evangelical Church for many years was not large, the power for good which they exerted was disproportionately great. Orwig, who had known many of these earlier preachers, in 1856 wrote the following splendid appraisal of their method and power:

"The preachers of the Evangelical Association were, in a classical point of view, unlearned men. Many of them had perhaps never read any other religious books besides the Bible, when they set out to preach. Some could not even read correctly. But these things we do not state here to their praise; for they certainly were not the cause of the good effects of their preaching. Nor do we wish to be understood, as if it were our opinion that men with so limited a knowledge of theology, history, and other useful sciences, were able to explain the fundamental doctrines and deep passages of the Bible, and to defend them against scoffers and infidels, or to labor in every manner for the kingdom of God, in which the learned, pious, and devoted minister can work. But this was not their call and object. Christianity among the people, where they lived and labored, needed not so much a thorough explanation and defense of its deep and mysterious doctrines, as a revival. To explain its theory was less necessary than to enforce its practice. The great desideratum was, to show to the sinner his lost and dangerous condition out of Christ, in his natural state—to convince him that the observance of the external duties of Christianity, without regeneration

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<sup>52</sup> *OH*, pp. 72 ff.



or a change of heart, is insufficient for salvation—to convince him that he must come as a condemned sinner, penitently, prayerfully, and believingly, to the great Friend and Saviour of sinners, in order to be pardoned and adopted into the family of God. This simple plan of salvation they had learned by their own experience, and could, therefore, preach it with the joyful assurance of having themselves an interest in Christ, and amid the attending influence and unction of the Holy Ghost. And herein lay the secret of the success of their labors. Hence the common people, who at that time were still more ignorant than they are now, understood their sermons much better than those of well educated preachers. And being able, plainly and impressively to explain to the sinner the way of obtaining peace with God, as they had themselves experienced it; so they understood also, successfully, to explain to, and inculcate on, believers the doctrines of Christ and his apostles, with reference to watching and praying, self-denial, growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, the practice of love to God and our fellow-men, perseverance in hope, faith, and charity, etc., as well as that with regard to future rewards and punishments. And was not this the method of the apostles and all their successors everywhere, except then and there where circumstances required more? And where this was the case, the more experienced and talented among our preachers were, by the grace of God, soon qualified for this also. By preaching almost daily, many of the ministers made rapid progress in qualifying themselves for a proper discharge of the duties of their calling; and those who persevered in reading and searching, as well as in daily prayer, were soon able to compete, in this respect, with most of the educated preachers of those days. And as to spirit, power, life, and effect, they were, on the whole, by far their superiors: hence the glorious results of their labors.”<sup>53</sup>

### 34. THE EIGHTH CONFERENCE

The conference session of 1815 was held April 4-6, in the house of Jacob Kleinfelter near Strassburg, on York Circuit, with fifteen preachers in attendance. Henry Niebel served his first term as chairman of the assembly and chose John Kleinfelter as the secretary. David Yerlitz, for family reasons, was compelled to retire from the active work. Henry Niebel was elected a second presiding elder and was stationed on the Salem District while John Dreisbach was stationed on the Canaan District. The brothers, John and Jacob Kleinfelter, and Thomas Bruer, (later Brewer), were ordained as deacons. The new preachers on trial were David Thomas, John Dehoff and Jacob Bruer. The maximum cash salary thus far received was \$89.67. John Erb and David Yerlitz promised to travel as much as their strength would allow. As was the

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75f.

custom, the preachers received their licenses and gave their successors the class books with instructions about the respective fields of labor.

On the Canaan District, Thomas Bruer and John Dehox were appointed to Franklin Circuit; Abraham Buchmann and David Thomas to York Circuit; John Kleinfelter and Jacob Bruer to Lancaster Circuit; and Leonhart Zimmerman to Schuylkill Circuit. On the Salem District the circuits were assigned as follows: Union to John Stambach and Jacob Kleinfelter; Bedford and Centre to Frederick Shauer and Henry Stauffer; Somerset to Adam Hennig and Michael Walter.

The membership had increased to 1108, being a net gain of 92. The next session of the conference was scheduled to be held in the month of June, 1816 instead of in the usual month of April. Camp meetings were conducted with good results on Union, Centre, York and Lancaster Circuits.

This year proved to be one of the most fruitful of the early years, showing extensions of the circuits in each case excepting Schuylkill. This circuit lost fifteen members this year and did not take on new life until the great Orwigsburg revival of 1823 and 1824, when it became the most prominent circuit of the denomination.

The adoption of new methods resulted in much good. Among these were the general meeting and the watch night service which frequently were combined. The general meetings began on Saturday about 1:00 or 2:00 p. m. and continued over Sunday. The Sunday morning service usually included the celebration of Holy Communion. For the watch night services, the members gathered in the early evening and on occasion continued during the entire night. After one or two sermons and sometimes several exhortations, the group spent the remainder of the night in prayer, song and testimony and in helping penitents to a conscious experience of a saving relation to God.

Hitherto the movement had been largely in the central part of Pennsylvania with some attempt to extend its influence to the north. But in this year John Dreisbach took the important step of preaching in Philadelphia. On Sunday, May 7, he preached in the Masonic hall, four doors from Poplar Lane on North Second Street; the second sermon was preached in the home of George Fisher; and the third, on his second visit in November 1815, was delivered in the commissioner's hall on Third Street, near Green.<sup>54</sup>

The election of a second presiding elder in the person of Henry Niebel and his assignment to the Salem District is another evidence of the constant zeal of these earliest preachers for the extension of the influence of their church. Salem District was composed of the newest and the far western circuits, Somerset, Union and Bedford and Centre.

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

Only three circuits were assigned to this new district leader, but he and all his associates knew the tremendous challenge to pioneering which this assignment involved.

### 35. AN APPRAISAL OF GEORGE MILLER

The most prominent theologian and literary genius of the new denomination, George Miller, died April 5, 1816, at the age of forty-two years, a victim of tuberculosis. Like many of his associates, Miller had literally burned himself out in strenuous effort, preaching from two to three hours, often in small stuffy rooms, riding many miles in all kinds of weather, exposed to all kinds of hardships, and at times giving himself to rigorous discipline of the body for spiritual benefit.

Miller had been led to his conversion by Albright himself, toward the end of 1802, and a few years later gave himself to the work of the ministry. His first year in the active ministry (1805) was signally blessed of God. He organized the Becker class at Mühlbach, and in Dauphin County the Jonestown and Fishing Creek classes and the Swatara class at the home of Michael Becker.

Miller's literary work was constructive and is worthy of note. When Albright left the first *Discipline* of the church unfinished, Miller took it up, completing the text and seeing it through the press by 1809. He prepared a short biography of Albright and in his last years also wrote his own biography. After the Conference of 1809 had experienced some difficulties with the order of business, Miller drafted a set of business rules which served to prevent any further difficulty in the matter of procedure. The second edition of the *Discipline* of the church, which appeared in 1817, was largely his work and contained Miller's "Episcopal Plan of Government." The Conference of 1809 had requested and authorized Miller to write on such subjects as might prove edifying to the Association. At the Conference of 1810 he presented and received approval for his brief biography of Albright which was printed the following year in Reading by John Ritter and Company at the expense of Miller and six ministers. This work was later incorporated with Miller's autobiography into a volume entitled: *Albrecht und Miller*, which was printed in New Berlin in 1834. The Conference of 1812 approved his *Thätiges Christentum* (Practical Christianity) which was printed in Reading, Pennsylvania, in 1814, and which later ran through many editions. While Miller was permitted to give to the church only five years of service in the active ministry, he spent the rest of his life in writing and in preaching on occasion. His literary contributions were made between 1809 and 1815, and his style in writing as in preaching was simple, never ornate, in fact severely plain, but well adapted to his practical messages.



From the time of his appointment to the Northumberland Circuit in May, 1806, Miller concentrated his efforts in this region and was instrumental in forming at least ten classes in a very short time. It is probable that Miller's phenomenal success and his evident genius for organization prompted Albright to call the Conference of 1807.

Because of his religious profession and devotion to the unpopular evangelistic movements, Miller was called upon to suffer a great deal. When his home at Temple, Pennsylvania, near Reading, became a preaching place and he became a class leader in 1803, his milling business was boycotted, his mill damaged, and his debtors refused to pay him. His appeal to the law failed because the justices shared the views of his enemies. Consequently he sold his property and purchased a small farm on Pine Creek, in Albany Township, farther north and west in Berks County, near the home of his father-in-law, Michael Brobst, where he operated a saw-mill in addition to attending to his farm.

In May, 1812, Miller purchased a small farm a few miles east of New Berlin, Pennsylvania, then the center of the Evangelical Church, and the county seat of Union County. Here he died and was buried in the village cemetery nearby. Henry Niebel preached the funeral sermon from the text, *Revelation 3: 10*.

Miller was a very powerful preacher, denouncing sin in all its forms, fearlessly, and with great severity. Like his spiritual father, Albright, he was a rigid disciplinarian and a great lover of order. At times his strictness was misunderstood; sometimes he gave offense when none was intended. But it was good for the church that there was such a masterful spirit to preserve its organization in that critical period which extended from the death of Jacob Albright until John Dreisbach had fully caught the spirit of both these men and could lead the church through the next generation, with the same order and regularity in which it had begun.

Unfortunately for the young denomination, the children of this ideal Christian and very cultured home were largely lost to the Albright movement, although not to the Kingdom. The Rev. and Mrs. George Miller had five children, Joseph, Samuel, John, Susan, and another daughter whose name has been lost and who was married to a Mr. Hackenberg. Joseph lived in Lebanon County and later became a minister of the Reformed Church. Samuel, generally considered the most scholarly of them all, wrote a very splendid work *Das Kern-Wesen von der Erlösung* (The Essentials of Redemption) which, as its title suggests, dealt with the heart of Christian life and thought. It was examined and endorsed by the Eastern Conference of the Evangelical Church and printed in Lebanon in 1836, since the Evangelical Publishing House was not reëstablished until later that year. Presumably it was

printed at the expense of the author as many of the other earliest approved works were published. Although neither his name nor the names of his brothers appear in the lists of active preachers in the church of their father, the names of both John Miller (licensed 1826) and Samuel Miller (licensed 1838) appear in the list of local preachers. It is quite possible that the transfer of these children to other denominations may have been a reaction to the excesses of demonstration which frequently characterized the leadership of the young movement after the more conservative and orderly leadership of Albright and George Miller had been lost. So while in the very beginning of the Evangelical Church many of its first adherents were won from the membership of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches, now already had begun the transferring of a number of the more quiet and orderly yet deeply religious Evangelical converts to the Reformed and Lutheran Churches. In the later years, one may fairly venture to say this early debt was repaid many times over. George N. H. Peters, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Peters, and the grandson of the Rev. George Miller, also became a Lutheran minister.

Those who knew Miller described him as having been nearly six feet tall and well proportioned. His face was oblong, his forehead high and full, and he had dark eyes, a large nose, prominent cheek bones, black hair, red eyebrows, a rough skin and large hands. He shaved his entire face which was a bit unusual in those days, wore coarse home made clothes, yet dressed in a neat and tidy manner.

An old document attached to his autobiography describes him very completely:

"Miller's great power of discernment, discretion, fearlessness, and his other abilities to build up the Church and spread the Gospel, cannot adequately be described. In faith, he was heroic, for his confidence in God's help was great. In the hottest persecution he did not let his courage sink, nor did he spare himself if suffering was at hand. When the heat of persecution was the greatest, he could infuse courage into his brethren. Neither allurements nor threatenings could move him from carrying out the Lord's commands. In the struggle against the enemies of the Kingdom of Christ, he constantly took the lead.

"He was very useful to his brethren in the Gospel, and was beloved and highly respected as a father among them. He conducted himself as a true shepherd towards the members of the Association, and led them in counsel and action. After Albright's early departure, these facts were especially realized. To sincere Christians he was a precious gift of God, and he was received by them almost as an angel, but to luke-warm professors, he was a pungent salt, for he reproved their hypocrisy very sharply, hence he was hated by them as well as by the world. At 'big meetings' he was especially diligent to elucidate and inculcate the necessity of growth in grace and advancement in divine life,

and to encourage believers to seek the sanctification of their souls. But his chief aim was properly to instruct his ministerial brethren, since he well knew that the building up of the Church was dependent upon wholesome and pure doctrines. In this matter he was profoundly experienced, and also possessed of a special gift to speak and preach with a view to such indoctrination.

"In the maintaining and execution of discipline he proved himself steadfast, and was no respecter of persons. Before his departure he had the pleasure of seeing the Evangelical Association advance and increase under the regulations which had been adopted; and that God awakened and qualified with His Spirit's power young men, to prosecute His work and extend its borders."<sup>55</sup>

### 36. PLANNING A NEW DISCIPLINE AND HYMNAL

One of the most important of all the early annual conferences convened June 11-13, 1816, in the barn of Abraham Eyer in Dry Valley, Union County, Pennsylvania. John Dreisbach was the chairman and Henry Niebel the secretary. Frederick Schauer and Leonhart Zimmerman were ordained elders and David Thomas, Michael Walter, John Dehoff and Solomon Miller, deacons. The probationers received into the itinerancy were John Freuh, Philip Schmidt, Moses Dehoff, Adam Ettinger, John Schilling, Benjamin Ettinger, John Rickel, Frederick Kaltreiter and Andrew Wolf.

The reports from the circuits indicated a net gain of 293 in the membership, bringing the total to 1,401. Three new circuits were established and several of the old ones divided. The highest cash salary received was \$92.48. It was resolved that hereafter itinerant preachers shall receive annually in addition to their salary an allowance of \$56 for clothes, provided the conference finds itself able to make such payment. There were now forty-one local preachers in the denomination. While these local preachers were authorized by the church to preach, they were compelled to spend most of their time in supporting their families and so could not preach daily as was required of active ministers by the *Discipline*.<sup>56</sup> They were expected to preach every Sunday, however. Usually they confined their efforts to places near their homes.

John Dreisbach and Henry Niebel were instructed to secure a printed form of license for the preachers, and Dreisbach also promised to secure a suitable seal for the conference. These men were asked also to unify and edit the *Discipline* and to compile a good and suitable collection of hymns. They also established the first Book Commission looking forward to the first publishing house which will be discussed in the next

<sup>55</sup> Quoted in YH(1), p. 130.

<sup>56</sup> *Discipline*, 1817, p. 48f.



chapter. It was unanimously agreed that local preachers after a probationary period of six years should, upon the recommendation of twelve itinerants, namely, deacons and elders in the active service, be ordained as deacons. The presiding elders were requested to visit the new missions in Ohio and New York. It was also decided that the first general conference should convene on October 14, 1816, at the home of Martin Dreisbach, Union County, Pennsylvania.

The general conference ordered for October was a delegated body. The twelve men who were elected to constitute this first general conference of the Evangelical Church were John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel, John Walter, Leonhart Zimmerman, John Erb, John Stambach, John Kleinfelter, Solomon Miller, John Dehoff, David Thomas, Adam Ettinger, and John Frueh.

From this beginning of its completely organized life, the Evangelical Church has maintained quarterly, annual, and general conferences, each with specific functions. The quarterly conference was the quarterly meeting conducted on each circuit by the presiding elder, or in his absence by the pastor in charge, for devotion and the transaction of the business of the circuit or parish. The circuit was composed of a number of appointments and preaching places under the supervision of a preacher-in-charge.

The annual conference was the annual meeting of all the ministers for worship, for survey and study of their results, for planning for the work for the ensuing year, and the time for receiving their annual assignment of fields of labor.

The general conference was the quadrennial session of the highest official body of the denomination constituted at first of all the ministers of the church and later of specially selected delegates from the annual conferences for the administration of the general interests of the entire denomination, including the publishing interests and other institutions.

For another term John Dreisbach remained the presiding elder on Canaan District. Under him the respective circuits were served in the following manner: Franklin, Jacob Bruer and Frederick Kaltreiter; York, Leonhart Zimmerman and Adam Ettinger; Lancaster, David Thomas; Schuylkill, John Frueh and Benjamin Ettinger; and Lake Mission, Jacob Kleinfelter.

Henry Niebel also remained the presiding elder of the Salem District and his circuits were served, as follows: Union, John Kleinfelter and Moses Dehoff; Columbia, Philip Schmidt; Centre, John Stambach; Bedford, John Dehoff and John Schilling; Somerset, Michael Walter and John Rickel; Canton Mission, Adam Hennig; and Scioto Mission, Frederick Schauer, who during the year left the work and united with another denomination.

The work prospered greatly during the year. Some of the old circuits added new members though others had net losses due largely to the enforcement of rigid discipline. Even to the present time this requirement of high moral character and active relationship with the denomination for membership on its rolls often reduces the total membership far below the representative strength of the denomination. It has been estimated that many of the members were dropped from the class records for neglect of duty, disobedience of the *Discipline*, and some for immoral conduct. Class leaders and exhorters on each circuit were only following their line of duty as prescribed by the *Discipline* when they counselled with wayward souls, and if they failed to respond to report them to the quarterly conference for dismissal.

This annual conference looms large in importance because it sent Adam Hennig and Frederick Schauer, the first missionaries to the west, into Ohio. As early as 1806 Philip and Daniel Hoy, sons-in-law of Abraham Eyer of the Northumberland Circuit, had moved to Ohio. Their wives had joined the Evangelical Church before their westward migration. In 1810 their brother-in-law, Martin Dreisbach, also moved to Ohio and these families formed a nucleus for the later work of the church in that state.

The new Scioto Mission in Ohio made no progress, due to the desertion of Frederick Schauer. This region including such fields as Fairfield, Ross, Franklin and Pickaway came to be known the next year as Lancaster (Ohio) Circuit and was served by John and Adam Kleinfelter. From this region alone sixty-eight ministers have been received by the church and fifty of these came from Fairfield County.<sup>57</sup> Adam Hennig had a remarkably successful year on the Canton Mission in the same state. Though the country was newly settled, Hennig was fortunate to find several families who belonged to the Evangelical Church before their migration Westward, and soon he had established a circuit with thirty-two appointments. Most of his work was in Stark County, but also included some parts of Tuscarawas, Wayne and Richland Counties, a total circumference of about four hundred miles. This circuit included such points as Canton, New Lisbon, Wooster, and Mansfield. In the fall of 1816, the presiding elder, Henry Niebel, visited Hennig and brought him an assistant in John Schilling. These two men worked diligently during the winter and in less than a year had fifty-five members. Among the first families who received the Evangelical preachers in Ohio were M. Reidinger, P. Strayer, A. Schilling, P. Oberlin, A. Rausch, C. Dillman, D. Williams, P. Stroh, J. Schwartz, and D. Hennig. Ten years later this work of the Ohio mis-

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<sup>57</sup> Niebel, B. H., in *Centennial Celebration 1916*, p. 82f.

sionaries had reached the northwestern part of that state and by 1835 had extended into Indiana.

The missionary responsibility upon the church was rapidly and effectively impressing Christians in America. It was only a few years before this that Samuel Mills and his associates had taken their "hay-stack pledge" at Williams College. In 1810, less than a decade before the Evangelical missionaries went to Ohio, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was constituted. In 1812, the same year that the first foreign missionaries left the American shores, the first missionaries of the Evangelical Church began their work in New York.

During this conference year a tragic end came to a man named Sharp, a leader of ruffians who delighted in disturbing the religious services of the Evangelicals of York County, Pennsylvania. On one occasion Sharp and his gang even went so far as to travesty a communion service in the street while the sacrament was being celebrated in the Evangelical gathering. His companions ate sweet cakes and drank whiskey as Sharp blasphemously used words similar to those of the minister at the communion service. Shortly afterward while Sharp was riding in a local race, he fell from his horse and died within a few minutes. Not a few regarded it as a judgment of God upon the blasphemer and for a long time the vicinity of Dover was free from any disturbances of religious meetings.

### 37. THE FIRST GENERAL CONFERENCE

Following the order of the Annual Conference of 1816, the twelve delegates elected to the general conference met at the home of Martin Dreisbach in Buffalo Valley, Union County, Pennsylvania, on October 14, 1816. John Dreisbach was elected chairman and Henry Niebel, secretary.

The first matter of real importance before the body, after the election of a chairman and a secretary, was the choosing of a manager for the newly founded printing establishment in New Berlin. Solomon Miller was elected as the general book agent, and as such, he was placed in charge of the entire administration of the printing establishment. Henry Niebel was selected as his assistant.

Most important of all the items discussed at this first general conference was the possible union with the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. The proposal had grown out of a long and careful study of the work of these two denominations which had begun simultaneously, in almost the same area and whose doctrines and politics were very much alike. John Dreisbach of the Evangelical Church and Bishop Christian Newcomer of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ



had met frequently and discussed the possibilities of merging the work of these two church bodies, so that when they came to this conference they were enthusiastic supporters of the movement. The discussions at this session are not preserved although one may fairly surmise that the Evangelical ministers and the United Brethren delegation which came with Bishop Newcomer discussed the question very thoroughly.

The general conference appointed six ministers as the official delegates of the Evangelical Church with a similar delegation from the Church of the United Brethren in Christ in a social conference. The term "social" conference indicates that there may have been some misgiving about the possibility of organic union but that it was felt that it would be well at least to have a more friendly relation between these bodies. A conference similar to this "social" conference had been held November 11, 1813, at which time four delegates from each denomination were present. At that time they remained together for several days but the object of the meeting was not achieved.<sup>58</sup>

John Dreisbach and Henry Niebel had completed their revision and enlargement of the *Discipline* and after examination and approval the general conference voted that if the merger with the United Brethren was not effected, 1,500 copies of the revised *Discipline* should be printed. This rather definite printing order indicates that the leaders of the church were not very optimistic as to the outcome of the "social" conference.

Since the hymn book with only fifty-six titles compiled by John Walter and published by the denomination was proving inadequate, the Annual Conference of 1816 had appointed Dreisbach and Niebel to prepare a new volume. The general conference examined and approved their new compilation of hymns entitled, *Das Geistliche Saitenspiel*, (The Spiritual Lyre), and ordered 1,500 copies printed.

The cash salary of itinerant ministers was set at \$60 plus travelling expenses.

The general conference adopted a new name for the denomination; instead of the "So-Called Albright's People," it was changed to "The Evangelical Association."<sup>59</sup> Until this time there had been apparently some confusion as to the exact name of the group. As late as May 1, 1815, when the lot for the first church in New Berlin was purchased, the purchasers Conrad Philips and John Walter were designated in the deed as "trustees of the Evangelist Concretion and Albright's Children

<sup>58</sup> Journal of Bishop Newcomer, p. 247. Quoted in Berger, Daniel, "History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ," Dayton, Ohio, 1904, p. 194.

<sup>59</sup> The original Conference Book on page 2 has the name "Diese Vereinigte Evangelische Gemeinschaft" (This United Evangelical Association). Evidently copying Wesley's name for his first Methodist groups, "The United Societies."

or Albright's people as they call themselves." <sup>60</sup> The new *Discipline* of 1817, which was substantially the basis of all the future publications of Faith and Order, bore the title which being translated, is: *Articles of Faith and Discipline of the Evangelical Association, in addition to the Object of their Union with God and one another*. There were one hundred and forty-four pages in this *Discipline* and the book was properly divided into chapters and sections.

### 38. THE SOCIAL CONFERENCE WITH THE UNITED BRETHREN

The social conference with the United Brethren was held the following February 14, 1817 at the home of Henry Kumler, Sr., on his farm near Greencastle, Franklin County, Pennsylvania.<sup>61</sup>

The delegation of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ was composed of Bishop Christian Newcomer, Joseph Hoffman, Jacob Baulus, Abraham Meyer, Christian Berger, and Conrad Roth. Those representing the Evangelical Association were John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel, Solomon Miller, John Kleinfelter, David Thomas, and Adam Ettinger.

There was unanimity in the conference that it was logical for these two denominations working among the Pennsylvania German people to unite in one body, nevertheless, this union was not effected at that time. The Evangelical delegation maintained that the representatives of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ were not duly authorized to complete a merger since their general conference reserved the right to review the whole matter after the social conference, and then decide on the issue. On the contrary, the Evangelicals were ready to merge at once, had this constitutional barrier not existed. The members of the United Brethren delegation wanted to merge at once in spite of this difference in authority of the two delegations.

In addition to this barrier there were differences discovered which might have created problems had such a union been effected at that time. The itinerant system for its ministry had not as yet been clearly established in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, whereas the Evangelical Association was very strict and from the beginning unyielding in this matter of the itinerant system for its ministry, allowing only itinerants to vote or hold office in the annual conference. There was also a difference of opinion concerning the place and value of a book of

<sup>60</sup> Deed Book A, p. 448, Court House, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.

<sup>61</sup> Berger, Daniel, *op. cit.*, p. 194. On p. 236 of this work Mr. Berger shows that Mr. Kumler, Sr., lived at Greencastle, Pennsylvania, from 1810-19. Stapleton, in *SW*, p. 107, agrees on this place for the social conference. *OH*, p. 89; *YH*(1), p. 142; and *EL*, p. 30, all maintain the incorrect view that the meeting was held at Conocheague (Canogechigg), Washington County, Maryland.

discipline as a rule and regulation for the life and organization of the church. There were in the delegation of the United Brethren Church at the social conference, some who openly opposed a book of discipline for their rule and regulation, whereas the Evangelical Association could not think in any other terms than of a *Discipline* that carefully and in detail set forth the order, life, and ordinances of the church. Dreisbach says that the general impression at this conference was that the Church of the United Brethren in Christ did not have a printed *Discipline*. It has been contended, however, that this statement in Dreisbach's notes about the conference was incorrect. Daniel Berger<sup>62</sup> points out that the United Brethren Conference of 1815 actually adopted a brief confession of faith and a few church regulations which in 1816 at Hagerstown, Maryland, appeared in print in a book of fifty-five pages.

The Rev. H. G. Spayth, one of the first historians of the United Brethren Church, also objected to the incomplete publication of the statements of the Rev. John Dreisbach. Dr. Spayth wrote that according to Dreisbach the chief difficulty at the social conference seems to have been that:

"It was then understood and agreed upon that there should be six delegates of each of the two denominations, and that these delegates should be authorized by both sides to negotiate a union, as we had postponed the new edition of our discipline till after our conference. But when we met at Brother H. Kumler's it was soon announced by the Brethren that they had no such authority to make a final decision on the subject of the contemplated union. This was to us very repulsive, indeed, and the result of the conference has been stated."<sup>63</sup>

More specifically then the reasons for the failure of this social conference were (1) the apparent difference of authority vested in the delegations, (2) differences of opinion about discipline and church government, (3) the rights of local preachers, (4) the itinerant system among the ministers, and (5) a suitable name for the new society if the groups merged. In the light of these apparent major differences of opinion it is quite certain that any legislation attempting a merger at that time might have merged sections of each church into a stronger body but there would undoubtedly have remained remnants of both former groups which would not have given consent and, therefore, would not have entered the union.

The fine spirit current among the delegates of both sides is shown in a beautiful statement of John Dreisbach:

"Notwithstanding this they insisted on our uniting with them, in spite of all these difficulties. But we said 'No.' For we considered it

<sup>62</sup> Berger, Daniel, *op. cit.*, p. 166. This *Discipline* of 1816 is now in the vaults of the Publishing House of the United Brethren Church, at Dayton, Ohio.

<sup>63</sup> Spayth, H. G., in *EM*, 1855, p. 68.



unreasonable under these circumstances and consequently could not agree to it. Yet we prayed with and for each other, preached and exhorted alternately, bade each other Godspeed in our operations and pledged ourselves to treat one another as Christian and Children of God. The failure of this attempt to bring about the union of these two denominations, displeased many members of both parties, yet, I believe, it grieved none so much as it did Father Newcomer and myself.”<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Dreisbach, John, Record of the Social Conference, quoted in *OH*, p. 90.

## CHAPTER V

### THE WESTWARD EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH

With the migration of German families from eastern Pennsylvania, the work of the Evangelical preachers was carried beyond the Susquehanna with such remarkable success that when the time arrived for the first general conference of the new church, less than two decades after the formation of the first classes, it was decided to hold the sessions at the home of Martin Dreisbach in Buffalo Valley, Union County, west of the Susquehanna. The new movement was not localized in any one section but rather was limited by its specific mission to the German people. Wherever Jacob Albright had found settlements of German people he went to preach. His biographer, George Miller, states that Albright visited Maryland and Virginia as early as 1796 on his preaching missions. It is certain that Albright preached at the home of Leonard Middlekauff just south of the Pennsylvania line in Washington County, Maryland. Near Woodstock, Virginia, there was a settlement of German people, who had emigrated from Lancaster County, which was visited by Boehm and Newcomer and undoubtedly by Albright, too. To the northward in Morgan and Berkeley Counties, West Virginia, there were also several colonies of Pennsylvania Germans among whom Albright preached at the home of John Snyder, twelve miles east of Berkeley Springs. In the "little Cove" near Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, Jacob Albright preached at the home of Mr. and Mrs. G. Eisenberger, whose son John became a minister of the church in 1821. In Bedford County it was the home of John and Mary Wilhelm of Will's Creek, near Hyndman, which became the founder's preaching place. A class was formed before Albright's death at Morrison's Cove near New Enterprise as a result of the work of this circuit-rider and his assistants. In this vicinity, Albright also preached at the home of Mr. Stoll, Mr. Lyon, Mr. Schnebly, Mr. Kring and perhaps Mr. Muhleisen.<sup>1</sup>

While the north central part of the state of Pennsylvania constituted a field of labor from 1809 called the Northumberland Circuit, the south and southwest in 1811 received its regularly appointed preachers, Dreisbach, Niebel and Becker on the Franklin Circuit. The Conference of 1813 instructed John Dreisbach and Adam Hennig to organize a new circuit in the southwestern part of the state. Hennig tells that Dreisbach was forced to return to his home to attend to the needs of his

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<sup>1</sup> For an excellent description of this beautiful part of Pennsylvania in 1800 together with the dangers and difficulties involved in travelling through its mountain passes see Hastings, Sally, *Poems and a Descriptive Account of a Family Tour to the West in the year 1800*, Lancaster, Pa., 1808, pp. 177-209.

family and so he continued to work alone. In July, 1813, he was successful in organizing a class of twelve members near Stoyestown, Pennsylvania.<sup>2</sup> In a short time numerous revivals occurred throughout this county and two decades later, between 1830 and 1832, there was a large ingathering of members in Somerset County, due, very likely, to the energetic leadership which John Seybert had previously given as the presiding elder in this area.

Though Albright had preached at Mr. Kring's in Cambria County, beyond the Alleghenies, there was no class organized there until 1814. The first preaching places were established in Fayette County in 1813 but the work developed slowly there. One is able to obtain somewhat of an idea of the extensive nature of these early circuits and the severe handicaps involved in trying to develop the work of the church over so wide an area with so few leaders when one reads a description of his work on the Somerset Circuit (southwestern Pennsylvania) in 1832 by Joseph Harlacher:

"In one round I had to preach in four counties. We had thirty-two preaching places, all in private houses except one, which was in a school-house. I had to preach every evening in the week except Saturday, and sometimes then also, and twice on Sunday. In August, 1832, I travelled on horseback 274 miles and preached thirty-three times. The first twelve months of my itinerancy I rode on horseback 3,300 miles."<sup>3</sup>

With a great concern for their members who had joined the westward migration, the conference which met in June, 1816, decided to send the first Evangelical missionaries to Ohio, to seek for new circuits and to give continued spiritual care and guidance to those of their fellowship who had previously moved beyond Pennsylvania. Among the migrants to Ohio who first received Adam Hennig and Frederick Shower (Schauer), the missionaries, were Philip and Daniel Hoy and Martin Dreisbach, all sons-in-law of Abraham Eyer. Hennig worked in the eastern part of Ohio while Shower gave his attentions to the central area. In a short time they had established as many preaching places as they were able to supply, Hennig's district being four hundred miles in circumference, with thirty to forty appointments. Travel was very slow and dangerous, many miles of their way being over rough Indian trails. In spite of these difficulties the work was soon established in Wayne, Stark, Columbiana, Tuscarawas, and Fairfield Counties. The first camp meeting in Ohio was held in 1819 on the land of W. Wise, eight miles north of Canton. Wise had formerly been a member of the Evangelical church in Centre County, Pennsylvania. The work in Ohio developed so rapidly that in the fall of 1826, Rev. J. M. Saylor travelled

<sup>2</sup> *CB*, 1844, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> *SA*, p. 135.



into the upper Sandusky region, and at the following conference session, the Sandusky Circuit was created and this mission covering four or five counties was assigned to Adam Kleinfelter.

The work in the State of New York also began to develop during this period. Great progress had been made since the first preaching began there in 1807, and since the visit of Dreisbach and McCray in 1812, the first regularly assigned preachers. Although Dreisbach and McCray, much discouraged after only a short stay on their assigned circuit, had returned to Pennsylvania, Christian Wolf, formerly a strong leader among the Evangelicals in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, worked patiently about Fayette, Seneca County, New York, until he had finally established a nucleus for the denomination. Jacob Kleinfelter, the first permanent pastor, was able to organize several classes in 1816 and by the end of that year had received forty-two members into the Evangelical Association. John Dreisbach paid another visit to the mission and went on into Canada, six miles beyond Niagara Falls where he preached at the home of Jacob Miller, and at the homes of his relatives Jacob and John Buck, near Burlington. All of the appointments in the State of New York constituted one circuit until 1832, when Buffalo Circuit was organized. Apparently the work flourished rapidly on the Buffalo Circuit, for by 1837 they reported sixty members and three years later this mission circuit became a self-supporting field of labor with Frederick Kreckler as its first pastor. Mohawk Circuit was established in 1833, and the following year the first church building of the denomination in the State of New York was dedicated at Clarence, about fifteen miles east of Buffalo.

### 39. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EVANGELICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE

While devoted missionaries of the Evangelical Association were carrying on the work of the church in western Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York, the officials, newly chosen by the first general conference in 1816, gave themselves to the establishment of the first church and publishing house, at New Berlin, Pennsylvania, which became the denominational headquarters.

The first church was a log building 38 by 34 feet and one story in height. It was dedicated on March 2, 1817, by the Rev. John Dreisbach, who preached from Psalm 27: 4. On numerous occasions it was found necessary to repair this simple structure and finally it was weather boarded and painted. Its first pulpit was like those in the other early American churches, high, rounded in front, and very inconvenient for the preacher as well as for the congregation. Some time later a new pulpit was installed and a small steeple and a bell were added. Many



FIRST CHURCH AND PUBLISHING HOUSE, NEW BERLIN, PA., 1817



COMMUNITY CHURCH NEAR ALBRIGHT'S HOME WHERE HE  
PREACHED HIS FIRST SERMONS





persons regret that this building was demolished before an historical interest, sufficiently strong to assure its permanent preservation, had been developed. The Historical Society, has, however, marked the spot on which this church and the publishing house stood, with an appropriate bronze tablet, which was dedicated August 2, 1927.

The first publishing house of the Evangelical Association, a small frame building 26 by 20 feet and one and a half stories high, stood beside the first church on a lot which had been purchased from Andrew Maurer and his wife on May 1, 1815. It, too, has been demolished.

The General Conference of 1816 gave to Solomon Miller and Henry Niebel, the newly selected General Book Agent and his assistant, specific instructions concerning the printing of materials. Though very small in number, the followers of Jacob Albright had developed a denominational consciousness sufficiently strong to lead them into the venture of establishing and conducting their own publishing business, an achievement which few of the larger denominations had as yet accomplished. This conference had also appointed a Book Commission to "meet annually for consultation in order to secure proper management and also to make a correct annual statement of all the publishing interests." This first Book Commission was comprised of John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel, Solomon Miller, and Adam Ettinger, ministers, and Daniel Bertolet, Philip Breitenstein and Christopher Spangler, laymen.

The full equipment for the printing plant had already been provided through the generosity of John Dreisbach, who on his visit to Philadelphia in November, 1815, purchased a press and fonts of type at a cost of \$375.08, or the equivalent of his cash salary for at least eight years. Dreisbach kept an accurate account of these expenditures: press and type \$366, packing box \$3.65, a strap \$.14 and for lodging and travel \$5.30. On January 3, 1816, Dreisbach also bought for \$21.50 a gilding apparatus for the book bindery from Christian Gleim, a printer in Harrisburg. On the fourteenth and fifteenth of January, he travelled once more to Philadelphia and purchased additional type costing some thirty dollars and two kegs of ink for \$14. He bought other minor essentials for the new plant and spent so much money that he was compelled to borrow \$3 for his return trip.

The actual work of printing in this first plant was done by George Miller, not a relative of the Rev. George Miller, but the son-in-law of one of the first members of the new church, Leonhart Zimmerman, whose youngest daughter, Margaret, Miller had married before moving to New Berlin. In order to secure a competent printer John Dreisbach interviewed Christian Gleim, an extensive publisher in Harrisburg, who recommended Miller as skilled in all branches of the business. Until his death in 1859, Miller worked at the printing trade and printed most of the volumes which bore the New Berlin imprint of the Evangelical

Association. During the interval of fifteen years between the closing of the first Publishing House of the Evangelical Association and the establishing of the second publishing house, Miller leased the denominational press and later bought his own press on which he did most of the printing for the church.

Before 1816 a number of books had been printed either at the instance of the denomination or of individuals in the church. Most of these were done on the press of John Ritter and Company in Reading, such as, the first *Discipline* of the denomination in 1809, John Walter's hymnal in 1810, and George Miller's *Life of Jacob Albright* in 1811. Miller's volume on Practical Christianity was first printed by John G. Jungman, also of Reading, in 1814. The first edition of Dreisbach's German *Catechism* was printed by Benjamin Mayer in Harrisburg in 1809.

No one is certain as to just which book was the first to be printed at New Berlin. It is quite possible, however, since the publication of the revised *Discipline* was postponed until after the social conference with the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, scheduled for February 14, 1817, that the first volume to be issued by the Evangelical Press was *Das Geistliche Saitenspiel* (The Spiritual Lyre), the first authorized hymnal of the Evangelical Church. Apparently the hymnbook was sent to the printer soon after the General Conference of 1816, and could have been off the press early in 1817.

The *Saitenspiel* was a book of 436 pages containing 487 hymns, listed under seventy-two topical divisions. This hymnal was received with great delight among the members of the young church and in other circles. It brought together in one volume many of the choice hymns found scattered in numerous song books. The compilers of the *Saitenspiel*, Dreisbach and Niebel, counted it a choice collection of hymns, and although it had grown to larger proportions than they had intended, yet it contained scarcely a hymn which the user would eliminate. A second edition of the *Saitenspiel* was issued in 1836 and a third edition in 1840. Nineteen hymns were added to the fourth edition which appeared in 1850 with the title changed to *Evangelisches Gesangbuch* (Evangelical Hymnal). The revision of 1877 included the important hymns from the *Geistliche Viole*, and was published for the first time with musical notes.

When Dreisbach and Niebel wrote that the *Saitenspiel* contained "scarcely a hymn which the 'reader' would reject," they accurately stated the chief use of the hymnal. In their splendid introduction to this hymnal the editors suggest the use of the book according to one's needs so that one will "sing or read hymns which fit his station." These hymns were read and sung by old and young alike and were used to express and deepen their faith.

In the Historical Society's copy of the first edition of the *Saitenspiel* some one wrote on the bottom of p. 404, hymn 454, "chosen by mother to be sung after her death." A free translation of the first stanza of this hymn is:

"Friend cease grieving,  
Wipe away your tears.  
Why shall there be complaining  
That I have finished my years.  
Be not sad at my death;  
I am free from the cares of earth."

Lieutenant J. H. Missemmer, Co. G. 151 R. P. V., carried with him through the Civil War a copy of the 1850 edition of the hymnal, printed in 1855. This hymnal, which is now in the library of the Historical Society, clearly shows the pages marked as Lieutenant Missemmer left them. The hymn numbered 449, "Who knows how near is my end?" apparently was frequently read.

The hymnal likewise was one of the chief devotional and study books of the ministers of the earliest years. Time and again men were limited to the Bible, the *Discipline*, and the hymnal as the sole library which it was feasible to carry in their saddle-bags. Therefore, the editors were ever careful of the theological implications and the actual words of the hymns printed. In the second edition of the *Saitenspiel*, edited by a committee consisting of John Seybert, J. G. Zinzer and W. W. Orwig, they wrote in their *Introduction*:

"By the second edition of this book we took excellent care to change certain words considered obsolete, and also such sentences in verses of several hymns which did not conform with the fundamentals of our teaching."

Since there had been some difference of opinion on doctrinal matters expressed in the conference sessions preceding this publication, one may understand the care implied in this statement. W. W. Orwig, who became the editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter* the year after this book appeared, and always considered an authority on doctrine, was particularly careful about clarity of expression in doctrinal matters.

The second edition of the *Discipline* in German appeared in 1817 and its title page read, *Articles of Faith and Discipline of the Evangelical Association, besides the Object of their Union with God and one another*. The title page bears the names of Solomon Miller and Henry Niebel although the actual work of compilation which they were compelled to do was very little. George Miller had worked on the revision for a number of years and had practically completed it before his death in April, 1816.<sup>4</sup> John Dreisbach also gave some time to it

<sup>4</sup> YA, p. 270.



for he and Henry Niebel were instructed by the Annual Conference of 1816 to unify and edit the *Discipline*. According to Dreisbach's *Journal* he and Henry Niebel spent the entire week of June 17 arranging the *Discipline* for the press and the week of June 24 on the *Discipline* and the new hymn book, both of which were approved by the General Conference in October, 1816.

This *Discipline* of 1817 was a real improvement over the earlier one in that it was topically arranged and included many more details of procedure. It made provision for the election of a bishop from among the presiding elders for a term of four years, with apparently no restriction on reelection. It also contained a ritual for the ordination of a bishop. Very significant is the remarkably concise and courageous statement of attitude in the closing sentence of the eighteenth article of faith:

"We believe that war and the shedding of blood are incompatible with the Gospel and the Spirit of Christ."<sup>5</sup>

The following year two more volumes came from the press, both of which bore the names of Solomon Miller and Henry Niebel as publishers for the Evangelical Association.

There was apparently a need for a less expensive hymnal and so the publishers brought out the *Geistliche Viole* (The Spiritual Viol) with 115 songs and 186 pages, costing about fifty cents or half the price of the *Saitenspiel*. This finally proved to be the most popular of all the early hymnals, going through twelve editions and being used widely among other German groups.

The second work to appear in 1818 was a reprint of *Menschen-Furcht* (Fear of Man) by the eminent German Pietist, the Rev. August Hermann Franke. The *Introduction* to this volume is written by John Dreisbach in which after quoting 2 *Timothy* 3: 16 and 17 he writes:

"So also will this book, which appears in this new edition be very practical for impartial, devotional and praying readers who seek and love the truth, which also was the chief reason in the annual preachers conference of the Evangelical Association for having it printed again, namely that God's glory may be extended and that the salvation of many souls may be accomplished through it.

"The holy and much honored A. H. Franke has here brought to light a pure teaching of true Christianity, how each Christian, teacher as well as listener, may walk according to his duty, office, and position without 'Fear of man' and as Christ's disciple and serve God in the true faith. Also here false and 'mouth-Christians' as well as hirelings and hypocritical unconverted preachers will be made acquainted with the true measure and weight of the Holy Scripture. So each will read hopefully for himself and thereby first prove himself whether 'fear of man' or 'fear of God' rules him."

<sup>5</sup> *Discipline*, 1817, p. 16.

The volume contains an excellent prayer beginning on p. 110 and from page 119-143 has an appendix of Bible verses as well as examples of the "Fear of Man" and what is evidently designed to be its opposite, "Faith-Happiness."

The unusual success of these new publishers led them to undertake in 1819 the publication of a New Testament with marginal references, a book of 540 pages, at a time when the entire membership of the denomination was still less than 2,000. It was only a small edition but much too large for a constituency of that size and, due to the depression after the War of 1812 and other European struggles, it with all the other books of the establishment sold very slowly. Just a short time before its appearance from the press, a large number of German Bibles had been imported and could profitably be sold at a lower price than this New Testament. It is the judgment of many that the unwise venture in publishing this New Testament compelled the temporary discontinuance of the Evangelical Press.

In 1820 a sermon by John Dreisbach on the subject *Slander* was published, and in 1821 there appeared a small paper bound volume of hymns called *A small collection of new Spiritual Songs*. These spiritual songs are of particular interest because the first songs were selected and translated by John Dreisbach, while the songs from page 29 to page 40 were written by Daniel Bertolet, a very prominent layman living near Reading, Pennsylvania, many of whose poems and hymns in his own handwriting are to be found among the collections of the Historical Society of the church. This volume is of particular interest because it appears over the name of John Dreisbach, who was chosen by the Conference of 1820 to succeed Solomon Miller, deceased. During this year Dreisbach was instructed by the conference to lease the plant, continue it, or abandon it entirely. The plant was leased to George Miller in 1825 at \$60 a year. Apparently the matter was not very easily disposed of, for as late as the conference of 1828 there is still the record that John Dreisbach was ordered to sell the Book Establishment upon terms subject to his discretion. It must be said to the credit of these early business managers of the church that they were scrupulously honest in motive and method. Of the publishing business Dreisbach wrote in 1826:

"Although our book affairs terminated in this manner, yet we were not without consolation, for we were assured that the purest motives had prompted us to engage in the work, viz., the honor and glory of God, and the welfare of our fellow men; and in the next place, we were glad that we were not insolvent, but had, after all debts were paid, still some means left for carrying on the business in the future." <sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Quoted in *OH*, p. 109.

The Book Commission was regularly continued and many books were bought and sold through the ministers and presiding elders, but for a period of fifteen years the church was not to venture again into the business of publishing books. Meanwhile all the printing for the denomination was done by George Miller, the printer, as his own private business.

#### 40. A PERIOD OF DIFFICULTY AND DECLINE

The failure of the first publishing house was by no means the only reason for worry and concern during the second and third decades of the nineteenth century on the part of the leaders of the Evangelical Association. Those who had watched the steady growth in membership from 740 in 1811 to 1,992 in 1820 with not a single year without substantial gains, became concerned when they observed that for the next three years there were not only no gains but during that period there was an actual loss of 138 members. This matter became the more serious to them because in each year since 1814 there had been no less than 200 new members received in any one year and actually in 1818, 396 had been added to their rolls. In less than a quarter of a century of colorful history, the new church had received more than 4,000 members, and yet in 1823 it had only 1,854 names on its records.

Another problem that confronted these leaders was the inadequate supply of ministers. In 1815 there were 15 travelling preachers ministering to the scattered membership, but by 1823 there were only 19, a very small gain indeed when one remembers that during this period the membership of the church had more than doubled. Even as late as 1828, when the membership had grown to almost 3,000 there were still only 22 ministers for these people. The seriousness of the problem becomes more evident when one observes that during the period from 1815 to 1823, the conference had actually received 32 ministers during those seven years, but there was a net gain of only 4 ministers. In the little more than a decade from 1815 to 1828, when the ministerial ranks had increased from 15 to 22 traveling preachers, the church had actually received 57 new ministers on trial. Despite the fact that there were only 22 men giving full time service in 1828, the records clearly indicate that there were 62 elders, deacons and licentiates enrolled, which means that 40 had been forced by various circumstances to locate or give part time service.

A number of factors contributed to the creation of this perplexing situation: (1) the war with England and the subsequent European struggles left a moral and financial dearth in its wake, (2) the rigid enforcement of the strict regulations placed upon both the clergy and membership in the new church and (3) the physical strain and the



inadequate salaries that necessitated many of the older and more experienced preachers to retire and their places to be filled by less efficient men.

#### 41. REGULATION OF THE CLERGY

From the very beginning of the church, strict discipline was exercised and enforced among the preachers of the Evangelical Association. The group was so small and responsibility so great that it required the most careful supervision on the part of Jacob Albright to keep his first membership intact and his first assistants sympathetic with and enthusiastic for his far-reaching objectives. Time and again he found it necessary to restrain the more radical ones and on the other hand to travel miles out of his way occasionally to encourage his disheartened leaders.

After the death of their leader the members of the conference decided that the only procedure which would assure the maintenance of the high standards constantly urged by their founder was a very careful and strict regulation of all the members of the itinerancy. That this has been done down through the years is manifested by the record of their sessions. In the first thirty years it is quite unusual to find the record of an annual session without the dismissal, expulsion or disciplining of some preacher. From the very beginning it was the custom at the annual meeting of the preachers to have the moral and religious examinations of the itinerants just after the opening devotional service. That this careful examination of each preacher and his efficiency on the field proved to be a major concern at each annual session is shown clearly in Orwig's description:

"As usual, after conference was organized, the character, life, and conduct, as well as the administration of each preacher, was closely examined, while the one, whose case was being examined, withdrew from the presence of the conference during the inquiry. This was the rule then, and has been so ever since: one withdraws after another, and while he is absent, his case is examined—if complaints are brought against him, he is called in and required to make his defense. These examinations generally take up the greater part of the first day of the session: at times, when complaints were brought against individuals, the investigation lasted for two or three days."<sup>7</sup>

Later, though just exactly when is uncertain, this custom was changed so that the minister in question might be examined in his presence. Describing this change Yeakel writes:

"If charges were preferred he was called in, and the investigation was held. If there was no charge, the next one was sent out, and the one coming in heard from the Chairman the gladsome words, 'No

<sup>7</sup> *OB*, p. 112f.

charges, brother.' Sometimes complaints were presented against the one outside which were not regarded as charges, yet they caused a discussion in the absence of the one concerned, and he could of course make no explanation. For this and other reasons, this custom was abandoned, and now each preacher must be examined in his presence."<sup>8</sup>

The rigid disciplining of the clergy and frequent dismissals may be accounted for by the fact that, as we have seen, the average term of the ministers was short, their labors strenuous, and frequently the financial support was inadequate. Under these circumstances many new and younger men were received who found difficulty in quickly learning and abiding by all the regulations. Then, too, writes Orwig:

" . . . in those early days of the Society, men were frequently received into the ministry, who lacked the necessary experience and moral firmness. It is pleasing, however, to perceive that under these circumstances, the Discipline of the Church was faithfully executed. As soon as a minister proved himself unworthy of his sacred office, he was called to an account and censured, or deposed from the ministry, or even expelled, according to the nature of his offense."<sup>9</sup>

Other censures and dismissals can be accounted for when one looks at the list of regulations passed by the Conference of 1818, which Orwig also mentions in part after writing, "In order to fully show the anxiety of the brethren of those times, to prevent the spread of every evil, and of everything that was in their view conformity to the world—we give some of the resolutions of the last conference:

"every preacher shall be forbidden to wear gloves during the summer, nor be allowed to use silver-plated bridle-bits or stirrups or loaded whips at any season, and in no case are they to adorn their person with large watch-keys; this resolution to be positively observed by all of our ministers whether they be connected with the Annual or with the Quarterly Conferences."<sup>10</sup>

Some of the delightfully human qualities of these early ministers become evident when it is recalled that Dreisbach once traded bridles in order to obtain a bit which he very much desired. Albright, who was travelling with him at the time, rebuked him not for trading for what he desired but because he had paid at least twenty-five cents too much in the trade.<sup>11</sup>

At the time of the beginning of the Evangelical Association, the moderate use of alcoholic drinks and tobacco were not then counted an evil by the members of most denominations. From the beginning, however, the rules of the Evangelical Church required its members to "avoid

<sup>8</sup> *YH*(1), p. 160.

<sup>9</sup> *OH*, p. 97.

<sup>10</sup> *BL*, p. 34.

<sup>11</sup> *YA*, p. 106.

intemperance and uncleanness of every kind; especially drunkenness and unnecessary using of strong drink.”<sup>12</sup>

It is very significant that on the records of this same Conference of 1818 there is found an important rule governing the reception of members from the Methodist Church:

“Only such members of that church shall be received into our Association who come with the consent of their preacher, who have removed from the bounds of their church into the territory of ours, or who for sufficient reasons, as for example, on account of language, have withdrawn from their church in a regular manner. And whoever of our preachers received them in any other manner shall be dealt with as a gross offender and transgressor.”<sup>13</sup>

The very nature of the rigid supervision of the work of the Evangelical preachers meant that this rule, too, must have been scrupulously observed. However, one of the early historians writes, “. . . it would have been desirable, if the principle it embodies, had been mutually regarded.” That many of the converts of the Evangelical preachers were received into membership by other organized bodies during these early decades is not a matter of any doubt, and incidentally helps to account for the problem of declining membership during this period.

One of the young probationary preachers, having married before his probation had ended, was excused by the Conference of 1828 upon the ground that he had been betrothed before he entered the ministry and because of the fact that in all other respects his conduct during his probation was above reproach. However, that conference ruled that no preachers are to be received until it has been ascertained that they are free from similar obligations.

From the Conference of 1829 it became the custom to read the rules for ministers immediately after the opening of each session, which custom has continued uninterruptedly to the present. Perhaps it is possible to obtain at least a partially correct insight into these early interpretations of discipline when one observes that the Conference of 1830 deposed four men from the ministry: (1) an itinerant deacon for neglect of duty and for leaving his circuit without cause; (2) a local preacher for distilling brandy; (3) another local preacher on account of uncharitable expressions against our disciplinary management, and (4) a local elder for un-Christian conduct.<sup>14</sup>

The Conference of 1831 found itself faced with the first major doctrinal controversy and deposed John Hamilton for “having promulgated doctrines contrary to the Word of God.” Another action that same

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<sup>12</sup> *Discipline*, 1809, p. 25.

<sup>13</sup> *BL*, p. 34.

<sup>14</sup> *BL*, p. 68.



year, which undoubtedly grew out of the previous difficulty, made it illegal for a minister "to publish any book or pamphlet which had not been previously examined and approved by the conference."

For the first time in 1832 there was a demotion of an elder to the rank of a deacon on probation for one year and the conference "resolved that in case an ordained preacher be found guilty of a transgression not sufficiently grave to exclude him from the kingdom of grace, and yet such as to require punishment, he shall be suspended from the exercise of all the functions of his office, except preaching, for a period not less than a year."<sup>15</sup>

Three local preachers were deposed in 1832 for not preaching and three for un-Christian conduct; one for opposition to the truth and for tolerating un-Christian behavior in his family, another for unpeaceful conduct toward his relatives and the third because of inefficiency. In this case again it will be noticed that the depositions were largely among the local preachers who lived constantly in one place and preached usually on Sunday somewhere near their homes. This created immediately a double standard of conduct and left them constantly open to the criticism of their neighbors who, at best, were hardly tolerant of these pietistic preachers. It also left them constantly in the midst of their friends and relatives, by no means all of whom became sympathetic with this new work, and with whom more or less friction was bound to arise.

That this early discipline and regulation of the clergy of the Evangelical Association was too rigid and severe is frequently attested by those who lived through it. Orwig, the first historian, who entered the ranks of the ministry in 1828 wrote about this critical period:

"Nor can it be denied, that then, and even afterward, offenders were often *too rigidly* dealt with. Had more patience and forbearance been exercised, no doubt many members and preachers could have been saved, who might have been of valuable service to the church. The Apostle's command: 'Put away from among you every wicked person,' was often too rashly carried out, and not conformably to other Biblical commands. To bear patiently the infirmities of the weak, and to restore the erring in the spirit of meekness, was too often neglected. In order to avoid the curse of the Most High, incurred by retaining the wicked and incorrigible, that treatment of the accused was often neglected, which might have reclaimed them from the error of their ways. The motives were generally good, but not always the consequences."<sup>16</sup>

Another early leader who also felt that much of the early discipline was too negative was John Dreisbach, licensed when he was but eighteen

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<sup>15</sup> *BL*, p. 69.

<sup>16</sup> *OH*, p. 147.

years of age by Albright himself in 1807. Through the strain of those early years he suffered a nervous breakdown in 1813 when he was but twenty-four and because his preaching appeared to be less enthusiastic than formerly he was suspected of "being captivated by the love of the world" and received a very rude reprimand from an older preacher. Though he served in various capacities afterward, Dreisbach was forced to retire from the active ministry in 1821 at the age of thirty-two because of "bodily infirmities." Fortunately he lived to be more than eighty-two years of age and even in his later years was invariably elected as a delegate to the general conferences. According to their previous custom, the General Conference of 1863, meeting in Buffalo, asked him to address the body. Among many other valuable things which he said, Dreisbach appealed:

"Brethren! Love one another. Stand up for one another. If the character of one brother is assailed, or if he suffers in any other wise, then stand up for him, though he be the least of all; for in this wise many a brother, who else would have to go under, can be happily saved, and may subsequently become a highly useful servant of the Church—harmony, too, will thus be strengthened, and thus our power for good increased." <sup>17</sup>

He who had suffered terribly under the maligning of his character just exactly fifty years before could not have forgotten the havoc it wrought in his own mind and even his bodily frame.

Dreisbach continued in that Buffalo address to touch an important point which he might well have and probably did stress in the earlier years of his leadership. After complimenting the conference on the number of capable men in their ranks, he warned:

"But, brethren, while I duly appreciate and inwardly rejoice over the enlarged, yet by the grace of God self-secured ministerial ability that you possess, as compared with us old ones, I would yet put you in remembrance of the important fact, that to be endowed from above is indispensable to the right discharge of every official duty. Grace converts the sinners, sanctifies, and builds up the household of faith." <sup>18</sup>

Well could he plead thus knowing that the church of the Civil War period might also come into a dangerous position similar to the period of decline through which he had lived just half a century before, when some of the ministers apparently had depended too much upon their own strength. At the close of the first quarter of a century of Evangelical history it could be seen that some preachers, and among them ministers who were counted great preachers, never reported a large increase in their membership. On the other hand, others, who were

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<sup>17</sup> *YA*, p. 310.

<sup>18</sup> *YA*, p. 309f.

counted among the middle class preachers so far as talents and eloquence are concerned, frequently reported signal success year after year. Drawing his conclusion from a similar observation of this period, Orwig wrote:

"Judging from these facts, it would seem that, in order to prosecute the work of God successfully, and to be instrumental in awakening and converting many souls, more depends on God's grace and the unction of the Holy Ghost, and the earnestness, faith and activity of the preacher, than on his natural gifts and talents."<sup>19</sup>

That the vast majority of these early church leaders worked diligently and faithfully is conclusively proven by the success of the movement in the face of untoward and most trying circumstances. Naturally irregularities were accurately recorded, but the sacrifices and the victorious living of the princes among these early pietists were not made a matter of record. Charles Hammer who was licensed by the Conference of 1830 writes of the earnestness of his associates:

"We spent much of our time in fervent prayer and the reading of the word of God upon our knees. This we often did in the forest, especially in the summer season, and when we had no suitable room in which to read and study. It was then the custom of many of the preachers to read the Word of God upon their knees, especially when looking for a text and thus also meditating upon their sermon. I knew one of our old preachers (Henry Niebel) who entered the ministry in 1809 who bore the marks of much kneeling upon his knees and took them to his grave. The chief aim was to preach the word of the cross with divine unction. A sermon might be ever so well arranged and finished—it would not be acceptable with the people when devoid of the influence of the Holy Spirit."<sup>20</sup>

Joseph Long and many other ministers even resorted to asceticism in their zeal for piety. In his diary, Long, later a bishop of the church, notes that he preached on Friday, July 12, 1825. On Saturday he had no appointment but fasted from Friday night until Sunday morning and then preached with good effect from *Psalms* 84:12. Apparently a number of the early clergy caught the inspiration from their founder for rigorous personal discipline that they might constantly be at their best.

In the notes assembled by John Dreisbach for Orwig's compilation of the first history of the Evangelical Church, there is an official report of the work in Ohio, presumably in the style of Bishop Joseph Long, covering the year 1828 when small gains were made over the entire church. "It was especially on Canton Circuit," reads this report,

<sup>19</sup> *OH*, p. 136.

<sup>20</sup> Letter of Charles Hammer in *CB*, August 11, 1884, p. 6.



"where the work of the Lord prospered so mightily, under the care of D. Manwiller and S. Tobias." That year Manwiller had been ordained as an elder and was heard to say:

"By the help of God, I am determined, if possible, to bring the circuit into a better shape." <sup>21</sup>

Two more years he was permitted to serve in the ministry and then the minutes of 1831 say "D. Manwiller died during the past year." The only other and the most elaborate record of this sacrificial service puts it:

"In this year, Brother D. (Daniel) Manwiller closed his earthly career, after having served six years as an itinerant with very good success." <sup>22</sup>

Even so, the record of the earlier and later years bears no written account of the lives and services of hundreds and hundreds of comparatively inconspicuous ministers whose having served with good success made possible the permanent establishment of the Evangelical Association, and, more than that, her signal success and unique service in perpetuating the pietistic zeal of the Protestant as well as apostolic forefathers.

#### 42. SEVERE TESTS FOR THE LAITY

The high religious standard set by the church for its laity kept the number of applications for membership at a low figure, and the regular annual purging of the roll also had a tendency to reduce the membership list on each charge. Even more deterrent in its effects was the unreasonable and almost unbelievable persecution by neighbors, former friends and even relatives of the new converts, who had the courage to allow their names to be connected with the Evangelical Association. Children of well-to-do parents of the established churches were disinherited, and some were threatened with violent death. Many instances could be cited of damage to or total destruction of property. Bodily injuries and manhandling by irate mobs led some to recant, and others to go west to keep their faith, while many remained to face all opposition, no matter what the cost.

One instance must suffice to show how, on numerous occasions, good Christian persons were denied the privileges of the established churches even to the refusal of burial privileges in the church cemeteries. John Kleinfelter was one of several brothers who came from Hanover, Germany, to settle near Shrewsbury, Pennsylvania. He and his wife Margaret were much impressed with the messages of the first traveling preachers of the Evangelical Association. In their old age they united

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<sup>21</sup> Quoted in *OH*, p. 141.

<sup>22</sup> *OH*, p. 150.

with the new group and gladly opened their home as a preaching place for the ministers of the Evangelical Church, even though it meant sore persecution at the hands of former fellow-members of the old church. When Mrs. Kleinfelter died in 1813, preparations were made to bury her in the cemetery of the church to which they had belonged for years. The church council, however, decided that she had fallen away from the faith and, therefore, refused the family the privilege of burial. One can easily imagine the feeling of John Kleinfelter. He had been largely instrumental in building that church and had laid his dead in its cemetery. Now he was denied the right to bury his wife among the others of their family! Mrs. Kleinfelter was buried in a private cemetery in a field on the Kleinfelter farm; and here others, who were excluded from the church cemetery because of the so-called loss of faith, were interred by the side of this courageous Christian. This family burying ground became the first Evangelical cemetery and, in later years, a church called Kleinfelter's Chapel was built nearby.<sup>23</sup>

A number of incidents could be told to the lasting credit of many earnest laymen, how of their own volition they not only courageously faced persecutions but zealously labored for the building of the church and for the effectiveness of its ministry. On numerous occasions, members walked from sixty to seventy miles to attend quarterly and camp meetings. During the cold, wintry days of northern Pennsylvania, Christian Wolf, a hatter, and the class leader of the Lewisburg class, led many of the men and women of his class ten miles across the mountains and back again each night in order that they might assist the class at New Berlin in conducting special meetings.<sup>24</sup>

John Rank settled in this same vicinity, Union County, when he moved from his natal place, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He had heard Albright preach and later opened his home near New Columbia to the Evangelical preachers. Afterward he became the first treasurer of the Charitable Society and was also elected publisher and Book Agent for the church. Although he was very busy as a justice of the peace, in addition to all the responsibilities he had assumed for his church, Rank always had time to attend to the needs of the preachers. The circuit riders soon found that at Rank's house there was always free lodging, laundry, and even food for their horses. Thirty-three years in succession a new junior preacher had been assigned to his circuit and he found time to counsel with each one, encourage the disheartened ones, and provide generously for the needier ones.<sup>25</sup>

Another illustration of Christian zeal on the part of a layman is to be found in the person of John Muck. John Muck was among the

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<sup>23</sup> SA, p. 113f.

<sup>24</sup> SA, p. 79f.

<sup>25</sup> SA, p. 83f.

first to open his home to Jacob Albright in the vicinity of Beaver Dam, Snyder County, Pennsylvania. His four sons, Jacob, Conrad, Samuel, and Daniel became members of the first class at that place, prior to 1808. At the age of eighty-eight, Muck died at East Rush, New York. Upon his deathbed he obligated his son to write to all his unconverted children and to his friends, and in his name entreat them to become Christians.<sup>26</sup> Such commendable zeal among the laity was sufficiently strong to face all persecution and would have guaranteed the security of any church of their choice. Fortunate indeed were the leaders of the Evangelical Association in these dark days in that they had lay companions whose zeal was quite the equal of their own.

#### 43. FURTHER REASONS FOR SLOW EXPANSION

In addition to the careful supervision of the clergy and the high moral standards for lay membership there were numerous other reasons, too, why the Evangelical Association grew less rapidly than some of the other denominations begun about the same time.

In the early half of her history the Evangelical Association confined herself almost exclusively to serving the German-speaking people, most frequently in rural sections, and hesitated to enter the rapidly increasing population centers rising up in wide areas of the West, unless Evangelical members moved into these centers and called for Evangelical preachers. It is true that as early as 1816 missionaries were sent into Ohio and New York, but largely because families of the church had already preceded them. There were from the beginning a very close family-like tie and a feeling of kinship among the members of the Evangelical Church, which in many places throughout the church continues to this day. This is evidenced in the fact that so many of the children of the earliest members of the church intermarried, as is shown in the entire first section of *Annals of the Evangelical Association* (1896), that splendid work written by Dr. Ammon Stapleton, who has done a great deal of genealogical study among the family records of the denomination.

On numerous occasions the earlier and later missionaries to the West carried their message far beyond the old established family lines from the East but invariably among the German people. Since few of them remained long enough in any given area to become thoroughly acquainted, and since the ranks of the ministry were changing so rapidly, it might appear that these men were less venturesome or at least less well organized than the Methodists for example. From his arrival in this country in 1771 until his death March 31, 1816, Bishop Francis Asbury, the general superintendent of all the Methodist work, kept constantly

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<sup>26</sup> SA, p. 61.



travelling from East to West and North to South, stationing his men to advantage, bolstering weak areas and encouraging personally his most remote missionaries. How those early Evangelical ministers missed their Bishop Albright! Had not his premature death deprived his clergy of their logical leader, the extension of the work might have been much more rapid. Bishop Asbury sensed the lack of administrative leadership among many of the evangelistic groups.<sup>27</sup>

Another very real factor in the delaying of the expansion of the Evangelical Association, already implied, was the fact that the work was almost exclusively limited to German-speaking people. Indeed this had been a fundamental reason for the original organization of the new church, but amidst changing conditions the leaders of this group were slow to change their plan. Although there were 120,000 Germans in this country before 1775,<sup>28</sup> their number increased much more slowly after that. In fact, the entire immigration from Europe in 1820 was but 8,485, of whom less than half were German people. From 1820 to 1830 only 7,000 Germans came into this country.

The evangelistic plan of the Methodists under Asbury was very flexible. One might deduce from Asbury's conversations with Dreisbach and Albright (cf. sec. 22, n. 32f.) that he cared little for the German people and was not concerned about their religious nurture. This was not the case, however, for Henry Boehm who travelled with Bishop Asbury as his companion in 1810, says that he preached in German on numerous occasions in private homes and at camp meetings from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati. Asbury was always present, whenever it was possible, on the occasions when Boehm preached in the German because, insists Boehm, "he had a great love for the German people and an imperfect knowledge of the German language."<sup>29</sup> As late as 1861, Boehm found a German church in Poughkeepsie, New York, where he preached in German which he had not done in years.<sup>30</sup> The Methodists, then, did not slight the work among the Germans when there was opportunity among them, but placed their much greater emphasis upon taking the gospel to the adventuresome pioneers who were crowding the western frontiers rapidly toward the Pacific. The difference in the result of emphasis is clearly shown in that while at the Civil War period the Evangelical Association numbered less than 50,000 members, most of whom were German, the Methodist Church had almost a million members.

The Evangelical leaders very seriously impaired the work of the

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<sup>27</sup> Boehm, H., *op. cit.*, p. 323.

<sup>28</sup> Kapp, Frederick, *Skizzen aus dem Lechatbale*, Leipzig, 1868.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 318.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 402.

church among English-speaking people when the conference of 1830 resolved:

"That our itinerant preachers labor diligently among the German-speaking people of the country, and that it is the sense of the General Conference that no more preachers shall be received into the travelling connection who are not somewhat proficient in the German language."<sup>31</sup>

It was to be more than a decade before this action was recalled officially by the Conference of 1843 and meanwhile irreparable harm had been done in that a sentiment had been created that the church was purely a German church. Worst of all, many of the children of the old Evangelical families, who preferred the English because they were more free in its use, were alienated from the church of their fathers. The action of the general conference was by no means intended to have such radical interpretation. For some years there had been a few preachers who could preach English sermons where they were desired. John Dreisbach, James Brewer and Adam Ettinger spoke English fluently. The dilemma which the 1830 conference wished to avoid was the reception of other men who spoke English and therefore were limited to serving only a few appointments, travelling really "on condition." Unfortunately all the consequences could not be anticipated before their action. Then too this strong sanction for the work in the German constantly was held up as a precedent long after 1843 by those who desired the work among the German people to remain the major emphasis of the church.

Still another reason for the limitation of the influence of the Evangelical Association before 1830, though a minor one, was the entirely unsatisfactory provision of homes for the itinerant preachers. As early as 1812 the conference had voted that on Schuylkill and Northumberland Circuits arrangements should be made to build or buy suitable dwelling houses for the families of poor itinerant preachers, but it was never carried into effect. A similar action, that wherever practicable a parsonage be built or bought by voluntary contributions, was recorded in 1826 but though recommended several times before, brought no results. In numerous cases ministers were forced to live in entirely unsatisfactory homes of their own which ultimately led to their travelling "on condition," i. e., within a reasonable distance from their own homes. This was not always satisfactory to the members on the circuits when for the third or fourth time, or even oftener, they received the same preachers. In other instances, where the purchase of a home by a minister was entirely disregarded in giving him an appointment, it worked untold hardship upon the minister and his family and caused great loss of time and money in travel. While this was by no means

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<sup>31</sup> *BL*, p. 65.

a major impediment to the development of the work, it is generally agreed that those who sponsored the movement to erect parsonages at convenient points on each field of labor were working for a greater efficiency in the ministry.

This matter borders so closely on the personal sacrifices and the inadequate financial support of the clergy that a separate section will be given to this subject here, although it might well be considered as an additional cause for the delayed development of the denomination.

#### 44. SALARIES AND SACRIFICES OF THE CLERGY

From the founding of the denomination, it was the custom to share and share alike among all the ministers whatever income might be received by the ministers of the group. This amount was never large, but with one exception these men heroically rode their circuits and preached regularly without consideration of the remuneration which they might receive. Indeed all of these men made large sacrifices in income to carry on the work which they counted more important than anything else in the world. The laymen of the young church did the best they could for their ministers, providing food in addition to cash salaries, and this not infrequently at considerable sacrifice.

The first record we have of the salaries of the pioneer preachers is in 1804 when Jacob Albright, John Walter and Abraham Liesser each received \$15.30. Walter was permitted to collect a special fund of \$37.33 to purchase a horse, which apparently did not suffice for the following year he reported that he collected \$18.67 in addition for this purpose. Alexander Jameson was received on trial at the conference of 1804, but at the end of the year of service was apparently dissatisfied with the salary which had been received, for the conference record states that friends raised \$66.67 as salary for Jameson and in addition he was given permission to collect \$69.33 wherewith to purchase a horse. During 1806, Jameson became so discouraged with his income, even when his brethren voted him an extra share that year, that he returned to his previous vocation. That year the preachers decided to receive no more candidates on trial who were not satisfied with an equal share of the general salary fund.

1806 also marks the beginning of the "Briefschaffsteuer" which was a subsidiary collection taken throughout the church each year to meet the incidental expenses of the preachers and to assist the poor of the Association. Five years later the highest amount collected by any preacher toward their common fund was \$45.56; the average or what each received was \$29.33. The subsidiary collection that year amounted to \$51.97 which was equally divided among four ministers, who apparently had greater need than the other four men in the active service,



and a poor man named Samuel Kupper. The next year three needy members of the church, in addition to the ministers, received help from the subsidiary collection which amounted to \$113.68.

At first thought, it is impossible to realize the determining effect which the very small salaries had upon the future of the church. By 1817 the average salary had mounted to \$56.40 and in 1818 to \$59.03½; and these were the high mark for more than a decade. Not all of the men received their share during these years; they all agreed that some of their brethren had greater needs than others and on this basis the funds received were divided. Even with this additional help it is easily seen that a number of these early capable leaders were forced to retire from the itinerancy after a very short period of service in order to make a living for their families. Some men served only one year for this reason. Those who were unmarried or who had means of their own were able to continue this sacrificial service a considerably longer time. Francis Hoffman, who gave sixty years in the active service and was a most successful minister, sacrificed much of what he had and might have had in order to continue in this work. He and his wife once owned two houses, both of which were sold to make it possible for Hoffman to continue his work as a minister since over a period from 1826 to 1840 his average salary was \$40.29. On one occasion in Philadelphia, Mr. Leary, the world famous dealer in used books, was so much impressed with Hoffman's ability that he offered him a partnership in his firm; but Hoffman refused this flattering offer to continue what he believed to be his calling. His judgment was beautifully vindicated, for in 1848 he was chosen a presiding elder in which office he rendered distinguished service for many years.<sup>32</sup>

The Conference of 1818 full well realized the inadequacy of the support which the common fund provided for the ministers and so that body voted to give each minister "a writing in the form of a petition addressed to the members of the Association asking them to bestow such gifts upon needy preachers as will secure for them that which, in the opinion of the conference, is necessary to their support, and which was not in the power of the conference to give."

By 1820 matters had become even worse when the salaries of married and single alike were \$36.30 which represented an annual contribution of about fifty cents per member for their ministers. The ratio of ministers to membership was very high, less than one hundred members to each minister, which also complicated this problem of adequate support. The low point in salaries was reached in 1821 when each minister received \$28.66 and in addition expenses for travel which varied from \$2.25 to \$25.52. These salaries represented an average

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<sup>32</sup> *SP*, p. 127.

contribution from each member of only twenty-eight and one-half cents. Despite the fact that living costs had somewhat decreased after the war, the salary schedule of these men pales even more by comparison with that of other churches. In this same year the married ministers among the United Brethren received \$124.10 each and the single men half that amount.<sup>33</sup> Already in 1815 the lowest Methodist salaries in New England were \$62 for married men and \$31 for single men, while in Ohio their men received respectively \$138 and \$69, although this was a bit better than the average schedule in the East.<sup>34</sup>

John Dreisbach was alarmed that during this difficult year almost one-third of the active ministers left the service for reasons listed as bodily infirmities or family affairs. Of this plight, he wrote:

"The wives and children of the itinerants of those days were not supported by conference, for which reason so many preachers were obliged to locate, to enable them, as honest citizens, to support their families decently."<sup>35</sup>

The more analytical Orwig challenged the ministry and laity alike in seeking the answer to the perplexity of this period. He wrote:

"It is not our object to cast any reflections upon these esteemed brethren; yet we cannot pass by this circumstance, without calling attention to the fact that the desertion from the ranks of the itinerancy of such a large proportion in one year, besides the number who had located during several of the preceding years, notwithstanding that some of them were really unwell, and may perhaps have been almost unable to travel, cannot easily be reconciled with the high calling and the important work which they had commenced in the name of the Lord. . . . To resign the sacred office, because it is deficient in prospects for a proper provision in old age or for accumulating wealth for children or posterity, would be base and a denial of the faith."<sup>36</sup>

That any of the early ministers entered their work with the hope of an adequate compensation or future security for their families is hardly compatible with the facts. And it must also be remembered that many of those who located to care honorably for their families did so temporarily, and as soon as their circumstances permitted, returned to the work of preaching. Perhaps the more sympathetic judgment of John Dreisbach who lived through these crucial years is to be trusted rather than the more censorious judgment of Orwig who did not enter the ministry until 1828 when salaries had risen about fifty per cent.

On the other hand Orwig calls attention for the first time to the fact that apparently no proper measures were taken to present this subject

<sup>33</sup> YH(1), p. 157.

<sup>34</sup> Boehm, Henry, *op. cit.*, p. 457.

<sup>35</sup> OH, p. 107f.

<sup>36</sup> OH, p. 105f.

in its proper light to the membership. Indeed the conference minutes bear no record whatever that any plans were discussed to properly educate the laity to the absolute needs of the church for its further advancement. Orwig explains,

"If this subject had been properly explained to the members, every one's duty with regard to it pointed out, and plainly indicated and enforced, there is little room to doubt that the salary of the preachers might even then have been increased by one-half, which would have been not only more honorable for the Society, but also contributed greatly to its more rapid spread, its increase in numbers and influence. . . . The ministers were certainly not lacking sincerity, but intelligence and a proper spirit of enterprise."<sup>37</sup>

"The small and inadequate support of the ministry was, unquestionably, one of the main reasons why the number of itinerants increased so slowly and the work did not spread more rapidly."<sup>38</sup>

Apparently, then, it was the rather universal judgment of those who lived through the period that a better insight and more businesslike administration and an even greater devotion of the clergy together with a more loyal and generous support by the laity would have largely increased the expansion and influence of the Evangelical Association.

A number of curious regulations regarding ministers and their salaries appear on these early minutes. The conference of 1823 ruled that "if money is advanced to a preacher and he does not preach longer than two years, he shall be required to refund the money." In that same year "it was decided that in case the conference provide a preacher with a horse, the said horse shall be the property of the conference." By 1831 this latter rule was amended to read, "but if the preacher pay a part of the cost he shall be held responsible for the balance only." The strict and very conservative business acumen of these early leaders is apparent everywhere in the minutes, for from the very beginning all accounts were carefully audited. The Conference of 1829 elected John Seybert "chief trustee of the money and other property which have been and will be bequeathed for the use of our Evangelical ministry," and they were careful to add, "with instructions to hold himself in readiness to give an account of his trust at any time it may be required of him."<sup>39</sup>

Following the custom established by other denominations, the members of the Conference of 1828 established the rule that a married minister who had had five years in the active service should thereafter receive double the salary of an unmarried minister, although this rule was not applicable on the Western District in Ohio until 1830. They

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<sup>37</sup> *OH*, p. 108.

<sup>38</sup> *OH*, p. 96.

<sup>39</sup> *BL*, p. 60.



also required the ministers thereafter to list not only their income in cash but also their total income in kind—meat, flax, et cetera.

Apparently some of the clergy were not very much concerned about the collection of their share of the salary funds so that the 1830 Annual Conference decided that,

"Such preachers of the Eastern and Western Conferences who, on account of neglect of duty, do not secure as much for the general salary and subsidiary funds as in the judgment of the conference they could have gathered, shall have their salaries lessened at the discretion of the conference."<sup>40</sup>

A most unusual procedure was followed when in 1829 "salary for two months was deducted from the support of one itinerant because he was in good health and engaged in secular business during that time." There was, however, always the greatest mutual concern for all the faithful preachers. Even when the later sessions of the various conferences made their circuits and stations independent of each other in financial support of the preachers, those who fell short of their due were assisted by general collections taken for that purpose at the close of each conference year, sometimes by funds from the proceeds of the Printing Establishment and Book Room, sometimes by funds from the Charitable Society, and in later years by funds from the missionary societies of the various conferences.

Another serious result of the low salaries of the clergy was their consequent inability to purchase proper books for study and intellectual development. These men were not uninterested in careful study despite the press on their time by other duties. The financial inability of the ministers and their consequent failure to purchase books, even the very reasonably priced but splendid volumes printed at New Berlin, led to the decline of sales at the first publishing establishment and contributed to its ultimate discontinuance, but much more serious was the effect upon the intellectual and cultural life of the preachers themselves.

Writing of these circumstances, which had so much more to do than most persons realize with the slow intellectual and cultural development of the clergy and laity alike in the Evangelical Association, Orwig writes sadly and somewhat prophetically:

"It was in earlier days not a rare case, that our itinerants had, besides the Bible, Hymn Book, and Discipline, scarcely a few dollars' worth of good books; and, as some of these were, nevertheless, generally able to preach at least *powerfully*, others seemed to have imbibed the notion, that a preacher's reading and searching were of little or no importance to him, provided he prayed diligently and earnestly for divine grace; forgetting that each can do this, without being necessi-

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<sup>40</sup> BL, p. 62t.

tated to neglect the other; and likewise forgetting, that ministers, whose minds are well stored with useful information, are not only the most acceptable, but also the most useful and efficient servants of God." <sup>41</sup>

Lest the burden for these early deficiencies be placed too heavily upon either the laity or the clergy of the struggling church, a glance at the general condition of the times will show that both were largely the victims of circumstances over which they had little or no control. After the war with England and the Napoleonic Wars on the continent, the entire world was caught in the trough of the financial wave. Toward the close of the second decade of the nineteenth century, the price of wheat had fallen from \$3 to 40c per bushel and other commodities were relatively priced in proportion. Henry Clay, speaker of the House of Representatives, in the Congress of 1823-24, describing the years near the close of the period we have been discussing in this chapter, said:

"The general distress which pervades the whole country is forced upon us by numerous facts of the most incontestable character. It is indicated by the diminished exports of native produce; by the depressed and reduced state of our foreign navigation; by our diminished commerce; by successive unthreshed crops of grain perishing in our barns for want of a market; by the alarming diminution of the circulating medium; by a universal complaint of the want of employment and a consequent reduction of the wages of labor; . . . and above all, by the low and depressed state of the value of almost every description of property in the nation, which has, on an average, sunk not less than about fifty per cent within a few years. . . . It is most painful to me to dwell on the gloom of this picture. But I have exaggerated nothing. Perfect fidelity to the original would have authorized me to throw on deeper and darker hues." <sup>42</sup>

Colonel Thomas H. Benton of Missouri likewise lamented the prevailing conditions:

"No price for property or produce. No sales but those of sheriff and the marshal. No purchasers at execution sales but the creditor, or some hoarder of money. No employment for industry—no demand for labor—no sale for the products of the farm—no sound of the hammer, but that of the auctioneer knocking down property. Stop laws—property laws—replevin laws—stay laws—loan office laws, the intervention of the legislatures in three-fourths of the states of the Union. . . . No medium of exchange, but depreciated paper, no change even but little bits of foul paper, marked so many cents and signed by some tradesman, barber or inn-keeper, exchanges deranged

<sup>41</sup> *OH*, p. 140.

<sup>42</sup> Quoted in *YH*(1), p. 177.

to the extent of fifty or one hundred per cent. Distress, the universal cry of the people. Relief, the universal demand, thundered at the doors of all legislatures, state and federal.”<sup>43</sup>

Gold and silver mines had not yet been discovered in our country so that the young nation was dependent upon Mexico, Peru and other South American countries for metals and hard coin. There were few banks and their paper was below par and frequently worthless. In times like these, living was difficult for all, but the lay and clerical leaders of the Evangelical Association sacrificed heroically and extended their work as widely and as wisely as they knew how.

Entirely disproportionate to the small return, which the Evangelical preachers of the first three decades received, was their magnificent dedication of all that they had, whether of means, mind, or service. By the side of the mere pittance which they received by way of cash salaries, should be placed the heroism which they manifested and the energies they expended in the cause the success of which they counted the greatest reward.

These men like the travelling ministers of the other early American churches were known as circuit-riders and like the representatives of the other churches, shared the vicissitudes and dangers described in the numerous volumes which have been written about pioneer preachers. Usually these men travelled and preached daily and at the close of the day were kindly received by someone who knew that they were far from home. Time and again these invitations to stop for dinner at noon or for the night proved to be the making of acquaintanceships which led to the establishing of new preaching places and the winning of new members for the church. While a kindly reception was usually given, the diaries of these circuit-riders reveal that it was not always so. George Miller once travelled well into the night and still found no host who would receive him, and so slept in the open, using his saddle for a pillow, and, turning his horse loose in the field for the night to satisfy its hunger.<sup>44</sup> Joseph Harlacher tells of the night he stopped with a kindly hostess whose rooms were all taken, but who allowed him to sleep before the open fire with a bag of bran for a pillow.<sup>45</sup> Harlacher, a man of devotional habits, was not to be outdone when for the night he stopped at an inn on the northern frontiers, and found the bar-room the only common room in which he could sit before retiring. With the permission of the host, he read aloud from the Bible and exhorted the frequenters of the place who listened attentively. That night as he went to bed he felt that he had done his duty.<sup>46</sup> On Sep-

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>44</sup> *MLA*, p. 82f.

<sup>45</sup> *SF*, p. 94.

<sup>46</sup> *SF*, p. 95.



tember 25, 1841, Harlacher was scheduled to dedicate the first Evangelical church, in Ontario, Canada, in the town of Berlin (now Kitchener). His enemies there were determined to turn their chagrin at his remarkable success in the Dominion into a public demonstration of contempt. So when the Evangelical people came to church on the morning of the dedication they found an effigy of their minister, the Rev. Joseph Harlacher, stuffed with straw, hanging in the center of the town.<sup>47</sup>

Both Abraham Buchman and John Seybert were threatened by men with guns who lay in wait for them as they crossed the Alleghenies. In ways almost miraculous both these preachers were spared for further service.<sup>48</sup>

In 1826 the Rev. Joseph Saylor came upon a group of pioneers in Ohio, busily cutting timbers for new homes, who were having a "log-rolling" as they called it. To his amazement, when he identified himself, he was invited to stay for a special dinner and immediately afterward all hands waited for him to preach for they had not heard a sermon in six years. That night he preached again to a large crowd which had been assembled from the neighboring settlements. During that same year while riding through the forest near Wooster, Ohio, Saylor was stopped by a man with the request that he preach a funeral sermon for the daughter of a poor widow whose pastor had refused this service because she was unable to pay the fee he demanded.<sup>49</sup>

Despite the fact that these circuit-riders covered wide areas there were still many German people who were not reached by their messages. Henry Boehm tells that on his trip through western Pennsylvania he found a group of German people in Connelsville, Fayette County, who were as sheep without a shepherd. He preached among them and left some German religious tracts with them.<sup>50</sup> No one knew better than these circuit-riders how entirely inadequate their number was for the task, yet one wonders what would have been the lot of these German people had these pioneer preachers neglected them. Unconsciously they were laying the foundation on which a greater religious service for the German people and others alike was to be based.

While the picture at the turn of the eighteen twenties was very dark, the day was not far ahead when, especially through the remarkable advances in Orwigsburg and Schuylkill County, the tide was turned and the Evangelical Association became once more a growing institution. Never again was she to see such crucial days in which her very existence was at stake.

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97f.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39f.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.

<sup>50</sup> Boehm, H., *op. cit.*, p. 312.

## 45. THE ORWIGSBURG REVIVAL

Although the Evangelical Church had its beginning in eastern Pennsylvania, the center of influence shifted rather quickly to the central part of the state. The remarkable success of the Rev. George Miller in the vicinity of New Berlin had brought that village to be the logical center for the new denomination and consequently in 1816 the first church building and publishing house were erected there. In 1810 the first camp meeting in the church had been held nearby. The first, second, and third sessions of the general conferences likewise were held west of the Susquehanna as were also all of the annual conference sessions from the fifth session in 1812, to the nineteenth in 1826.

The outlook for the young religious group was none too bright in 1823 when at the annual session it was reported that there were 1,854 members, 59 local preachers, and only 19 itinerant preachers. John Dreisbach sensed the seriousness of the situation when he wrote:

"Although we now had three districts, yet we numbered four itinerants and 138 members less than in 1820."

But these early leaders were undaunted by the difficulties which confronted them and the reverses which they met. Dreisbach continued:

". . . we took courage, and in humble reliance on God's promises . . . we continued our labors, and we were not disappointed."<sup>51</sup>

Well might they be encouraged, for during the year 1823 there began in Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania, the county seat of Schuylkill County, a revival which continued three years and brought many converts into the church. Among these converts were many persons of prominence, some of whom became the ministerial and lay leaders of the church. This revival also strengthened the work east of the Susquehanna so that, with the added normal growth of a little more than a decade, the eastern and western parts of the church were more nearly on a parity again. Shortly afterward it was possible to separate the work in Pennsylvania into the East and West Pennsylvania Conferences with the Susquehanna river as the boundary.

Back of the great revival of 1823, under the leadership of the newly appointed but not yet fully ordained pastor John Seybert, lay the efforts of several courageous men. Jacob Albright had preached in a church near Orwigsburg, but was so slandered and his character maligned that he was not permitted to return. Methodists and other preachers of the evangelical type as well were forbidden to preach in this vicinity. This opposition did not come from unchurched people as might be expected but from members of the established churches. Schuylkill, Berks and

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<sup>51</sup> Quoted in *OH*, p. 113.

several of the adjacent counties were notorious for immorality, adherence to the old ecclesiastical institutions, abhorrence of all innovations and particularly for their hatred of religious sects. In some instances when a new minister was called to a parish, little or no inquiry was made regarding his character, but the question invariably asked was whether he was opposed to such novelities as Sunday Schools, Bible, Tract, and Missionary Societies and Prayer Meetings.<sup>52</sup> Many persons in this area were opposed to education and to all innovations for social or community advancement. Although there were noble persons living among them, their number and influence were so small that little impression for good was made upon the community.

In this kind of an environment, Daniel Focht about 1817 had the courage to permit preaching in his home at his iron-forge near Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania. Under the guidance of Adam Kleinfelter and Moses Dehoff, he was led to a vital Christian experience and felt impelled to devote his life to bringing the gospel to his spiritually illiterate neighbors. He was licensed as a minister in 1821 and by 1822 had obtained permission to preach in the court house at Orwigsburg. Shortly afterward, a camp meeting was held on his farm and Richard Rickert and Joseph Zoll, prominent citizens of Orwigsburg, were converted. Their homes also became preaching places and during that year John Breitenstein, then pastor of Schuylkill Circuit, preached in the courthouse, on its steps, and in private homes. The field was just ready for the incessant labors of the young, enthusiastic John Seybert, who had been appointed their pastor in June, 1823.

Wisely following the example of his predecessor, Seybert began to preach in the courthouse, schoolhouses and homes in and about Orwigsburg. On one occasion when he found the schoolhouse locked in which he had an appointment to preach, he accepted the invitation of a colored man named Wilson and preached in his humble home. The success of that first year was so phenomenal that by January 23, 1824, Seybert organized the first class of twenty-five members. Under the leadership of the new ministers, J. C. Reisner and J. W. Miller, the revival continued through a second year. The additions to the church were so numerous that two new classes were formed with John Hammer and Francis Hoffman as leaders. Hoffman later became a prominent and successful minister. Charles, a son of John Hammer, became a minister and three of his daughters became the wives of ministers; Elizabeth, Mrs. J. P. Leib; Sarah, Mrs. Jacob Schnerr; and Susan, Mrs. Solomon Neitz. Among the converts of this Orwigsburg revival who became ministers of the church were the brothers Joseph M. and Jacob Saylor, John P. Leib, Daniel Berger, Charles Hesser and Bishop W. W. Orwig

<sup>52</sup> *OH*, p. 115.



who united with the church in Union County. John Hammer and Samuel Rickert became local preachers.

John Seybert attributed the beginning of this decisive movement to two remarkable meetings: (1) one held at the courthouse on August 17, 1823 and (2) the other held at Wilson's December 7, 1823. On the fly leaf of the small volume of Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ* which Richard Rickert purchased from Seybert in 1850 is found the bishop's own inscription, which literally translated means, "First converting 'Durchbruch' (climax or revival) near Orwigsburg, at Wilson's, December 7, 1823, when seven souls were converted to God." Seybert concludes that "at Orwigsburg a deep, solid foundation was laid for the work of the Evangelical Association."<sup>53</sup> Literally the tide had been turned and from this victory at Orwigsburg in the East, the church was to move forward in continuous growth and power.

#### 46. CAMP MEETINGS

Following the success in Schuylkill County, camp meetings were becoming increasingly popular and largely accounted for the gains that were achieved in many localities. These camp meetings grew spontaneously out of the "big meetings" or quarterly meetings which, since the first years of the church, had been conducted at centrally located spots. Like the first camp meeting in Kentucky, the first Evangelical camp meetings on the land of Michael Maize, May 30, 1810, and on the farm of George Miller the following October, were prolongations of successful and largely attended "big meetings."

The first camp meeting in this country occurred when the Rev. John McGee, a Methodist, and his brother the Rev. Charles McGee, a Presbyterian, who were touring Tennessee and Kentucky, arrived at a settlement where a Rev. Mr. McGready, a Presbyterian, was conducting a sacramental meeting. The people of the countryside heard of the remarkable services conducted by these three ministers and came in large numbers. Because of the unusual helpfulness of the meetings, they were continued through a number of days and the people meanwhile supplied themselves with provisions and lodged in covered wagons or huts and booths which could readily be erected. The McGees discovering a new instrument in their hands announced a second camp meeting and a third and in each case had similarly successful gatherings. Throughout this country and the world, such camp meetings proved to be an excellent agency for evangelism on a large scale, combining the freedom of the large masses of people which could not have been crowded into the small churches and the appeal of the out-of-doors.

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<sup>53</sup> Neitz, Solomon, *Das Leben und Wirken des seligen Johannes Seybert*, Cleveland, 1862, p. 89f.

These evangelistic mass meetings left a permanent influence on the religious life of all parts of our rapidly expanding country during the next seventy-five years. During the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth, when converts were not to be won so readily by mass evangelism alone, many of the grounds used for such camps came to be used as summer schools of religion as well.

The novelty of living out-of-doors as well as worshipping three or more times a day in the open appealed to the members of the Evangelical Church and so in all sections of the State of Pennsylvania and of Ohio, they could be seen riding sometimes a hundred miles on their wagons laden with tent poles and canvas and provisions for a week or more in camp. These camp meetings came to be considered sacred, for many were converted there. The desire to help win their neighbors to Christ and to enrich their own spiritual lives led many to spend some time in camp meetings each year.

The first camp meeting in the Evangelical Association on the farm of Mr. Maize near New Berlin was also the first German camp meeting in this country and perhaps the world. The first German camp meeting of the United Brethren was held in 1815 at Rocky Springs, Franklin County, Pennsylvania,<sup>54</sup> and it was not until August, 1839, that the Methodists conducted their first camp meeting for German people at Carthage, near Cincinnati, Ohio.<sup>55</sup>

In a very short time it became the custom to have a camp meeting on every district in the church and by 1816 it was written into the *Discipline* as one of the duties of presiding elders "to set the date for and conduct camp meetings according to his judgment."<sup>56</sup> On such occasions the preachers of the entire district and from more distant points attended the camp and, as he saw fit, were assigned by the presiding elder to preach at the morning, afternoon or evening services. Sometimes more than one sermon was scheduled for a service. The purpose of these meetings was two-fold; the salvation of sinners and the edification of believers. To these ends the ministers gave their best efforts.

Describing the services at a camp on the farm of John Hennig in Penn's Valley in 1818, John Dreisbach wrote:

"Never did I hear the brethren deliver better, more instructive and energetic sermons than at this camp meeting. Sinners were awakened and converted, and the children of God greatly edified and advanced in the work of grace."<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Drury, A. W., *A History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ*, Dayton, 1924, p. 363.

<sup>55</sup> *Christliche Apologete*, July 25, 1889; Douglass, Paul F., *The Story of German Methodism*, 1939, p. 92.

<sup>56</sup> *Discipline*, 1817, p. 53.

<sup>57</sup> *Journal* quoted in *OH*, p. 95.

The public nature of these meetings more than ever brought the Evangelicals to the attention of their enemies and provided opportunity for rowdies to interfere with religious services, and to engage in persecution. In some instances, as at the meeting near Womelsdorf, Pennsylvania, in May, 1825, the radicals, by the extremities which they perpetrated in conducting mock services and by blood letting, actually endangered the safety of the entire camp so that the meeting was closed one day early.<sup>58</sup>

On the farm of Christopher Spangler in Brush Valley, Centre County, Pennsylvania, a number of prominent persons were converted at a camp meeting in 1832. Mr. Spangler's home had been a preaching place since Albright visited it in 1805 and in 1807 he became a local preacher at the first conference session of the church. In that same community lived several brothers by the name of Gramley. Frantz Gramley was an official of the Reformed Church. When the services had begun Mrs. Gramley had a desire to attend the camp meeting but her husband tried to dissuade her. He pointed out how wrong it would be to attend those meetings and by their presence encourage the heretics who were leading the people away from the old churches. On the contrary Mrs. Gramley reasoned, "If they were right and the camp meeting people wrong, their going there would do them no harm; but if they were wrong and the camp meeting people right, it was to their interest to know it." The Gramleys attended and soon became loyal supporters of the Evangelical body. A number of their descendants became ministers of the church.<sup>59</sup>

The number of converts through the camp meetings during the fifty years when they were most popular mounted into the thousands. Many prominent ministers of the church were led to their conversion and call to the ministry through these meetings. Prominent in this group is W. W. Orwig, who with Daniel Brickley walked ten miles from Buffalo Valley to a camp near Middleburg in 1826 where they were converted. Near Margaretta Furnace, on old York Circuit, a camp meeting was conducted on the land of Jacob Gohn in August, 1845, where during the seven days of the meeting, one hundred and ten persons, almost exclusively the heads of families, were converted.

*Der Christliche Botschafter* of November, 1838, near the close of the third year of its circulation, carried a description of a camp meeting held on the Mansfield Circuit in Ohio which had two hundred and fifty regular attendants at the camp and many conversions. On the last night alone sixty-eight persons came forward on the first invitation while many fell on their knees in penitence and prayer right at their seats. Page after page in the church papers was given over to the re-

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<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>59</sup> *SF*, p. 30.



ports of camp meetings and each year the time of the various camps was announced through these periodicals.

A most unusual commendation and criticism of the camp meetings of the early nineteenth century and of one of the Evangelical camps in particular is to be found among the papers of Daniel Bertolet who received a letter written September 9, 1821, by George Boone, a cousin of Daniel Boone and a member of the Society of Friends. Boone wrote:

"On the afternoons of the 5th and 6th instant, I attended meetings, and was pleased to see so many people assembled, who generally speaking, were still and attentive, and as far as the explanation of texts, I thought edifying and believe was well received by the auditory."

One may see the vivid contrast in Boone's background in the Society of Friends, however, in the following paragraph:

"As to the tumultuous and noisy part of the worship, it differs so much from the doctrine on record from our forefathers, and the construction that I have ever given to the Holy Scriptures, that I must confess as yet it has not been any edification to me. Nevertheless, I think it's my duty to leave that part where it is, and judge of it in myself and not in others.

"I think my conscience witnesses to me that thee art seeking peace for thy own and others' souls, and in due measure hope (thee) has found peace. I know thee reads religious books. . . . If I believe such as we have an account of in Sewell's history, and in a number of other books, to have been faithful servants of the Lord, and the doctrines preached to this day by their successors—how is it possible that I can think the modest, still and quiet meetings of the one, and the forward, vulgar and noisy of the other, both right? On the afternoon of the 6th, all the satisfaction and edification I had received the day previous, and the same day, and by the well spoken discourse in good sound English by Ettinger (Rev. Adam Ettinger), was all, as it were, destroyed by the unwarrantable remarks by Jacob Erb, the one who has lost an eye. (Rev. John Erb, who had lost one eye.)"

Here Boone goes on to take objection not only to the manner of conduct of the service but especially to the type of material included in Erb's sermon, which indeed was typical of many camp meeting sermons containing many appealing illustrations rather than instructive and expository materials such as Boone had found to his liking in the sermons of Ettinger. He concludes his letter to Bertolet:

"I first considered whether or not to write to thee on the above occasion. Sometimes I thought best not,—again that it was advisable, and considering that thee must be assured that I have nothing but good will to all religious people of every denomination, and wish for the preservation of your Society in putting down vice and immorality, all

the success that Christians can desire—occasioned me to trouble thee, and conclude as ever thy real friend. (Signed) George Boone.”<sup>60</sup>

The criticisms of Boone stand on their own merits. The camp meetings among Evangelicals and other groups usually presented a strong emotional appeal to hundreds and thousands who could not and would not have been won to a Christian way of life by any other appeal. The very fact that camp meetings have been supplemented in many places by schools of religion and leadership education is an indication that the Evangelical Church has been changing the manner of presenting the appeal for the Christian life just as other Christian denominations have done in the last decades since the decreasing popularity of the methods of mass evangelism. That camp meetings will continue, with their type of emphasis, is assured for many still yearn for and respond best to that kind of appeal, but that there will be an increasingly larger emphasis on Ettinger's method seems certain.

#### 47. THE CONFERENCES DURING THE PERIOD 1817-1830

Fourteen annual conferences and three general conferences were conducted during the thirteen year period from 1817 to June 1830 under consideration in this chapter. The three general conferences in 1820, 1826 and 1827 had comparatively little work which fell outside the powers of the annual conference and so these general sessions were held jointly with the annual conferences of these years.

Granting a petition from the itinerant preachers in Ohio, who believed that their work had prospered sufficiently, and who deplored the great expense and loss of time involved in attending annually a conference as remote as eastern Pennsylvania, the joint conference of 1826 established the second conference in the new church, and called it the Western Conference. For four years they had had a separate district in Ohio supervised by the Rev. Adam Kleinfelter, their presiding elder. The wisdom of this action was confirmed by the remarkable growth of the work in Ohio during the immediate years that followed. At the very first session of the Western Conference held in the home of Henry Rauch, near Wooster, Ohio, ministers were appointed to four circuits, which was just twice the number of the previous year.

The most cordial relation existed between the Eastern Conference and the Western Conference, which were the only conferences in the Evangelical Church until 1839. In the very first year of these two conferences, two ministers, J. Miller and G. Enders, were sent from the Eastern Conference to fill in the ranks of the rapidly expanding Western Conference. All through this period, however, the Western Conference was under the supervision of the parent group in the East in a number of ways.

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31f.

The Western Conference was instructed to meet annually at least three weeks before the session of the Eastern Conference and to submit the record of its proceedings to the Eastern Conference for its approval. Up to 1835 the proceedings of the Western Conference were approved by the Eastern Conference and its minutes were recorded with the Eastern minutes. After 1835 the Western minutes were still sent to the Eastern body, although the Western Conference kept a correct conference record for its own use. In order to build a closer bond of union the general conference a few years later ordered each conference to send a copy of its minutes to the other so that each might profit from the other.

In 1827, at the first annual session of the Western Conference, its total membership was reported as 523, with 85 members newly received; while the Eastern Conference that year had a membership of 2,044, with 393 accessions. The General and Eastern Conference which met in joint session in June, 1827, in the newly erected church building in Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania, instructed the quarterly conferences "to coöperate with the presiding elders in the appointment of proper persons whose duty it shall be to collect funds throughout the entire Association for the support of the worn-out preachers and their families; with this understanding, however, that the Eastern and Western Conferences shall each support the said families within their respective bounds, in accordance with the provisions of our Church Discipline." This is apparently the first legislation which provided for a division of responsibility between the conferences, which in so many of their other relationships operated practically as one conference. A closing statement in the minutes shows beautifully that a division of responsibility was certainly not a division of loyalty for the secretary wrote, "Love, peace and unity crowned this session, blessed be God now and for evermore, Amen!"

The Western Conference continued in a dependent relation upon the Eastern Conference until the formation of the three conferences by the General Conference of 1839. Until 1835 its minutes were submitted to, revised, and approved by the Eastern Conference, and recorded with its minutes. Until 1839 it was found necessary to accept financial assistance for the support of its ministers. The pioneers who ventured to Ohio apparently had little cash and consequently were able to support their ministers only very meagerly. All through these years the ministers of both conferences equalized the salaries at the annual sessions through receipts from the special collections. The total number of itinerant and local preachers in the entire Association in 1828 was eighty. The Western Conference asked the parent conference in 1828 to station the preachers in Ohio with the request that at least three of the ministers



should be ordained men and that Adam Kleinfelter represent their group on the stationing committee.

All through those early years after the death of Albright the preachers of all the conferences were stationed by a committee consisting of from three to five men appointed annually for this purpose. Usually the chairman elected at each session and the presiding elders were on this committee but there was no definite policy in the matter. The first appearance of a stationing committee was at the session of 1812 when George Miller, John Walter and John Dreisbach were elected to that office. Apparently these three had previously done the stationing after Albright's death for the minutes of 1809 already state that the travelling preachers on record were George Miller, elder; John Walter and John Dreisbach in full connection. It is barely possible that George Miller, who presided at all those early conferences, assumed the directing power in the conference until 1811. The conference of 1813 had Miller, Walter and Dreisbach station the preachers once more but after that, though the number remained constantly at three the committee was never the same until a happy combination was apparently discovered in 1817 in John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel and John Kleinfelter who were elected to this same office at each of the next three sessions. The stationing committee was enlarged to include five men for the first time in 1823 when the Ohio District was added as a third area to be supervised by a presiding elder. In 1828 the committee consisted of James Barber, a veteran who knew the conference areas very well, John Seybert, a presiding elder and the chairman of the conference, T. Buck, another presiding elder, P. Wagner, a pastor but former presiding elder and Adam Kleinfelter of the Western Conference. The following year the committee consisted of three men; Thomas Buck, John Seybert and Adam Kleinfelter. In that year the first two were still presiding elders and the president and secretary of the conference respectively.

The ninth annual conference meeting in June, 1816, elected John Dreisbach, Henry Niebel, Solomon Miller, Adam Ettinger, ministers and Daniel Bertolet, Philip Breitenstein and Christopher Spangler, then all laymen, as members of the first "Chief Book Commission" to superintend the printing establishment and book bindery with all their appurtenances, as long as the conference should see proper. This commission was instructed to meet annually and to make a correct annual statement of all the publishing interests. The following conference elected the first agents to serve for the Book Commission on the various districts whose duty it was apparently to receive books from the publishing house for sale and distribution in their districts. These agents were discontinued by the General Conference of 1830 and the presiding elders made the sole agents. Later conferences granted ministers a ten per cent discount on their purchases and in 1835 the general con-

ference made the presiding elders and the pastors agents and provided that for their trouble the presiding elders should receive "a royalty of one cent on every small book and two cents on every large book that is sold on his district and delivered through him to his preachers."

The last lines of the minutes of the Conference of 1817 include a statement that "the preachers received their licenses and gave each other the class books and desirable information upon all grave and important subjects." A similar statement had appeared as early as 1812 and while the language changed slightly from year to year the fact is that these early ministers discussed carefully with their predecessors the fields which were assigned to them as pastors. This important conference of 1817 also ruled that it is "improper to grant a preacher's license to men who preach but a few times during a year or perhaps not at all, and who neglect those duties which are for their own edification and for that of the church." This action had reference, undoubtedly, to inactive local preachers who did little else than hold their licenses.

Two important acts of legislation regarding admission of proper persons into church membership occur during this period. The first was a ruling in 1818 regarding the admission of persons coming from the Methodist Church, which has been previously described. The second legislation resulted from charges preferred against a preacher of the Western Conference in 1829 for baptizing a person who had already been baptized in infancy. The result was "a unanimous resolution expressly forbidding our preachers to re-baptize under any circumstances." The reasons given for the action are: (1) our church *Discipline* gives no such directions; (2) we can find no authority in the Sacred Scriptures for re-baptism; (3) it is our belief that its introduction would be followed by evil consequences. The Eastern Conference endorsed the action. This unconditional action however, was later modified by the General Conference of 1839:

"Our preachers were authorized to administer, preach and defend infant as well as adult baptism according to our form; also to re-baptize such persons who were baptized in their childhood if they make application and cannot otherwise satisfy their consciences, no preacher being allowed, however to *advocate* re-baptism."<sup>61</sup>

The *Discipline* of the church was ordered to be translated into English by the Conference of 1829 but it did not appear in print until 1832. A rather unusual action by the Western Conference this year was the stationing of Elias Stoeber to Canton Circuit and G. Schneider to the Lancaster Circuit, and then the note:

"It was agreed that the Eastern Conference should station the remainder of the district."

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<sup>61</sup> *BL*, p. 93.

This action was not an open flaunting of the authority hitherto reposing in the Eastern Conference but rather an action which these ministers felt must have been for the good of the work. It was in a sense perhaps a "travelling on condition" on the part of the preachers mentioned. That the action was taken without question or offense by the parent conference is shown by the fact that in the final list of appointments that year these men were stationed as desired. Apparently a precedent had been set, for in the following year the Western Conference stationed one of its men, George Mattinger, and referred the remaining men to the Eastern Conference for their assignments.

The nineteenth annual and third general conference in joint session in New Berlin in June 1826 passed an action and properly recorded a rule which had been previously adopted in 1824 but not included in the minutes, creating an annual conference of local preachers which was to be held on each district by the presiding elder before the annual session of the travelling preachers. The chief object of this conference was the investigation of the conduct and doctrine of the local preachers, a report of which was to be made to the regular conference of itinerants. Although the minutes of the Conference of 1832 state that "it was made obligatory upon every local preacher to attend the annual local preachers' conference," this rule was never carried into full effect. In fact the place of the local preacher constantly dwindled in importance until in the more recent years very few persons have held this relationship to the church.

The ordination of Martin Kibler, a local preacher who in 1830 was ordained as a deacon, caused some discussion and a conference ruling that "no such ordination as that of M. Kibler shall take place, as long as our church discipline has not been changed."<sup>62</sup> The record is not clear here whether Kibler had transferred from some other denomination or whether the rule of 1816 "that a local preacher may be ordained as a deacon after a probation of six years if he secures the signatures of twelve itinerant preachers" was not yet printed in the discipline. While Bishop Breyfogel in his table<sup>63</sup> lists 1824 as the date on which Martin Kibler obtained his license there is no such record in the minutes of that year. Consequently it may have been a question about the eligibility of Kibler for this order. Another slight irregularity during this period was the ordination of John Seybert as a deacon in 1822 when he had been granted his license to preach only the year before, although he had served "Under the presiding elder" from September 1820 to June 1821. Among the outstanding leaders of the church who were received into the ministry were John Seybert in 1821, Joseph

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<sup>62</sup> *BL*, p. 63.

<sup>63</sup> *BL*, p. 407.



Long in 1822, and W. W. Orwig in 1828, all of them destined later to be bishops of the church.

John Seybert, who was the secretary of a number of the sessions of the conference during this period before 1830, frequently inserted some personal comments into the record, as for example, in 1826:

"There existed peace and harmony among us and a new bond of love: also the determination to disseminate the word of God to the best of our ability, with prayer, exhortation, and preaching, and to live as a salt of the earth and a light of the world in self-denial, faithfulness, and constancy until death, through Jesus Christ, our Lord." <sup>64</sup>

It is fitting at the end of our consideration of this highly important formative period in the history of the Evangelical Church to close this paragraph with the very words which Seybert wrote into the minutes of 1829 with the announcement of the death of Rev. John Stambach:

"We entertain the hope that for him faith has changed to sight, labor has been rewarded with rest, and that having sown to the spirit he is reaping life everlasting." <sup>65</sup>

So may it be with Seybert and his contemporaries to whom the Evangelical Church owes so great a debt for their formative work during these early years.

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<sup>64</sup> *BL*, p. 44.

<sup>65</sup> *BL*, p. 59.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FORMATIVE PERIOD, 1830 TO 1850

No greater transformation in the Evangelical Association took place in any comparable period than that between the years 1830 and 1850. During this period the young church with but two conferences, confined almost exclusively to the State of Pennsylvania, with scattered appointments in Ohio and New York, having a membership of only 3,580 and 71 travelling preachers of whom only 34 were in the active service, grew to be a church of five conferences with frontiers reaching into Canada, Michigan, Wisconsin and Iowa, and having a membership of 21,179 and 195 itinerant preachers with an additional 185 local preachers.

The work of the Evangelical Association until 1820 was confined to those who spoke the German language. In 1850 the *Discipline* and regular publications of the church were printed in English, as well, and an English-speaking membership was rapidly increasing. During this same brief span of twenty years the polity of the church developed from the more elementary methods of regulation and government to those mature forms of organization and guidance which have largely prevailed since that time. All this transformation took place during the life-time of some of those more capable leaders of the earlier period, who had known and worked with Jacob Albright.

### 48. THE CHURCH FOLLOWS THE FRONTIER

In 1879 the year after Marietta, Ohio, became the seat of government for the Northwest Territory, nine hundred boat-loads of settlers drifted down the Ohio River from Pittsburgh. By 1820 the frontier had pushed across the Mississippi River into Missouri, and northward to the Great Lakes. In another thirty years it touched the eastern edges of Nebraska and Kansas.

This westward trek was far more than a conquest over nature. It was the beginning of a new people who, in the next century, were to contribute the major portion of venture and achievement in the spirit of the United States. It is very difficult for one living in the speed and comfort of the twentieth century to visualize the ox-cart, the Conestoga wagon, the flint-lock musket and the coon-skin cap. The very indifference of the Eastern states to the need of the pioneers for roads, canals, and postal service, gradually weakened the ties that bound them to the mother states. Long before the Civil War there arose, in this vast area of the Ohio Valley and the West beyond, a new people, in-

dividualistic and restless, practical and inventive, exceedingly democratic, but in religion very emotional, and in politics utopian.

Many of those who had remained in the East were glad to see the pioneers move westward. Differences in culture had made many of these more conservative souls feel themselves far superior to their more sturdy, vigorous and sometimes even uncouth neighbors. Cotton Mather considered it disrespectful of God's institutions to pioneer beyond easy reach of ecclesiastical and political authority. Even more descriptive of eastern sentiment was Timothy Dwight's definition of the frontier as "a safety valve allowing the escape of the explosive advocates of innovation." Their kind were unable to dissociate themselves from their inherited European ways sufficiently to see that just beyond their western horizon was developing a new type of national mind which was soon to be their master. The West blended high and low from North and South, with plenty of European blood to add flavor and color to its emerging creation. Godly folk, who intended to build a literal heaven in their new clearings, soon found that their neighbors were bent on quick fortune and a gay life, and that the day of the Kingdom must wait a later day. Among the adventurous multitudes who risked their lives and fortunes to gain the West, were hundreds and thousands of zealous Evangelicals, who sought not only a better land than their farms in the East had proved to be, but a place free from persecution in which to worship God.

Three routes of travel opened to the pioneers looking westward: the valley of the Mohawk through New York, the mountain gaps across the Blue Ridge into Kentucky and the Southern States, and the passes of the Alleghenies in Pennsylvania. Although for one hundred years after the first permanent settlement on the east coast of Virginia no white man had crossed into the valley of the Shenandoah, numerous groups of German people from Pennsylvania, shortly after the beginning of the eighteenth century, had taken up their residence there. Some time after 1758, perhaps about 1762, Martin Boehm, then a Mennonite and destined to be one of the first bishops of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, preached among these German people in Virginia. In this area a number of Whitefield's converts preached in the English language and occasionally ventured as far north as Pennsylvania, where they were called the "Virginia Preachers." These lay preachers, known in Virginia as the "New Lights" or sometimes "English Preachers," exerted little permanent influence upon their communities. Attracted by the religious needs of these German people, Jacob Albright, about the turn of the nineteenth century, travelled through the Valley of the Shenandoah and preached to them on numerous occasions. The Evangelical work prospered so that in 1837 six-



teen preaching places were established in this region, and the Shenandoah Circuit gave promise of a splendid future.<sup>1</sup>

By the year 1830, to which we have directed our attention in this chapter, literally thousands of German people were scattered throughout the states from New York to Minnesota, and from Iowa to Virginia. Their settlements radiated from Pennsylvania in the form of a great fan with Pennsylvania as the hub, from which most of them had migrated. Among these German people the circuit-riders of the Evangelical Association labored and preached the gospel in all its simplicity and power. Their message and manner of presentation were admirably adapted to a people whose simple manner of life was exceeded only by their simple faith and piety.

Many members of the Evangelical Association shared in this migration of German people and at times entire small communities and classes of Evangelicals joined this westward march. Near the close of the first quarter of the nineteenth century almost the entire Thomas class from the old Northumberland Circuit moved to Ohio. Among this group, to mention only the heads of families, were John, George, and Fred Harpster, John Thomas, Jr., John Wales, Jacob Reber, Isaac Gill, Jacob Treas, and the venerable Andrew Wonder. Some of these families settled in Wayne County near Wooster, Ohio, and others in the Sandusky region near Flat Rock, now Seneca County.<sup>2</sup>

After Bishop John Seybert had traveled through the West and had become very enthusiastic over its opportunities, he organized a class according to the *Discipline* with all the proper leaders, before they went West, so that they might be encouraged on the way and when settled would be properly organized to foster and promote the spiritual life which they had already found and of which they were possessors. Preachers, too, carried the news about the limitless possibilities of the West. It is more than mere coincidence that the migrations of Evangelicals increased with the wider travels of their circuit-riders. Upon the specific recommendation of a travelling preacher a number of emigrants from Kleinfeltersville, Pennsylvania, selected Illinois as the location of their new homes. Many sons of adventuresome fathers who had daringly crossed the Susquehanna in the earlier days now crossed the Alleghenies. Restless and still more venturesome, numerous families after only a short stay in their first homes continued westward to the wide expanse of the prairies.

One such family was that of John Tobias and his wife Mary Elizabeth, who in 1832, moved from the vicinity of Reading, Pennsylvania, to Circleville, Ohio. Constantly in touch with their church, this home

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<sup>1</sup> *CB*, Vol. III, No. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *SA*, p. 61.

was frequently visited by Evangelical preachers. In a short time most of the family yielded to the lure of the West and moved to Illinois, where several sons became ministers of the Evangelical Church. Samuel preached many years in Pennsylvania and Illinois; Daniel, due to his untimely death, served only one year on Wooster Circuit in Ohio after his admission to the ministry in 1833; David was a local preacher. Of the grandsons of this pioneer family, Benjamin Franklin Tobias became a minister in Ohio, Simon A., and L. B. Tobias served in the Illinois Conference, J. H. Tobias in Kansas.<sup>3</sup>

Most of these migrants and the preachers who followed them found only two trails from eastern Pennsylvania across the Alleghenies to the West and Southwest: the one corresponds roughly to what is now the National or Old Trails route and the other is called the Lincoln Highway. General Braddock travelled over the former trail in 1775 in his disastrous attempt to capture Fort Duquesne from the French. The second trail, and quite likely the more popular because of its better construction in the early days, follows the route taken by General Forbes in 1758 when he took Fort Duquesne for the English and renamed it Fort Pitt. On this trail the Tuscarora or Cove Mountain, mentioned frequently in the diaries of the early preachers, rises to an altitude of 2,240 feet. Beyond that point, the highway leads over the main ridge of the Alleghenies at an elevation of 2,908 feet and then descends into Somerset which was a very prominent early preaching point. The elevation of these passes made travel hazardous enough, but the difficulties were multiplied because there were so many ranges to be crossed and the trails in places were almost impassable.

One marvels all the more at the courage of westward travelers when one remembers that the first so-called "pike" was built between Philadelphia and Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1794, and the first steam boat in 1807. The first railroad with horse power was not known until 1826 and Stephenson's locomotive "the Rocket" was not heard of until 1829. Bishop Seybert was travelling in the greatest of luxury when on May 6, 1839, he rode from Philadelphia to New York by railroad and steam boat. Yet, undaunted, these dreamers rode westward on horseback and in their sturdy "Schooner" wagons. One would hardly expect a present day bishop to travel across the mountains to Ohio in a newly purchased heavy wagon, as Bishop Seybert did in 1841, in order to accommodate a friend in Ohio who needed the wagon. In 1842, Bishop Seybert took 23,725 volumes from the Publishing House in New Berlin to Ohio and other western missions. Even though some of the volumes were small Sunday School books, their weight was so great that it would have required a four-horse team to have moved them

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<sup>3</sup> SA, p. 27f.

in one load from the Publishing House. He made that journey from New Berlin to Circleville, Ohio, by foot, canal, rail, and river, and it took him just two weeks to do it. It was through just such difficulties and hardships as these that men and women, seeking freedom of religious worship and of the open life in the West, were forced to travel often at the risk of their lives.

The courage of the pioneer settlers was exceeded perhaps only by that of the pioneer preachers who rode these mountain passes regularly because they felt a definite responsibility for the religious guidance of their fellow countrymen beyond the mountains. Rev. John G. Zinser has left some vivid descriptions of his travels in Ohio when early in this period he served a circuit of thirty-five appointments having a circumference of three hundred miles. He writes:

" . . . the journeys are necessarily long, and also very difficult, owing to the country being new and the roads bad, so that the horse has sometimes to wade up to his knees in water and morass. The distance from one appointment to another being often from twenty to thirty miles, and the roads bad, the preacher is obliged to travel the whole day, and often does not arrive until the congregation has assembled and is waiting for him. . . . I frequently was compelled to spend the day on the road in the severest cold, and when I reached my appointment, I had scarcely any time for secret prayer, and no other closet than the snow-clad wilderness."

There is not the slightest plea for pity in his appeal although he does object to the criticism of some who found fault, under these circumstances, because the preacher does not visit them. Rev. Zinser's great burden was for more preachers,

"Many of our old preachers would, undoubtedly, be in the field, were they not compelled, by the want of adequate support, to stay at home. O that our boundaries of Ohio could be supplied with the necessary number of ministers." <sup>4</sup>

The necessary reitrement of many of the married preachers during these early years of the development of the Evangelical Association undoubtedly hindered its progress markedly. It meant in each case that these places, if filled at all, were filled by inexperienced men and the results were obvious. Even the later Bishop Long found it necessary at one time to retire from the active ministry in order to care properly for his family. Perhaps one of the reasons the Methodists grew so rapidly in the West was the fact that most of their ministers followed Bishop Asbury's example and remained unmarried. At least as early as 1782, seventy-one of the eighty Methodist ministers were bachelors. Bishop Seybert remained unmarried so that he might better

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<sup>4</sup> Quoted in *OH*, p. 251f.



perform his mission which constantly weighed so heavily on his heart. Occasionally he jested about his being a bachelor. Rev. William Yost tells of Seybert's preaching at a camp meeting in Eastern Pennsylvania during the summer of 1853 when Seybert said:

"You know that I am unmarried; but if I should ever take to myself a wife I would not now have grace sufficient for the occasion. I would have to acquire more; for I imagine that a married man must have more religion than a single man."<sup>5</sup>

His unmarried state at times made him an easy prey for the gossips, who in some instances caused him great inconvenience. While serving as a missionary in northwestern Pennsylvania in 1833, he finally was able to stop all derogatory rumors by obtaining a letter indicating that he had not cheated his brother and another letter from a justice of the peace in his home county stating that he was not married and did not have a wife and children whom he was refusing to support.

Bishop Seybert was a tireless itinerant all his life. After having served two successive terms as a presiding elder, he besought his conference to send him as a missionary at large to the northwestern parts of the state. His *Journal* is a most accurate account of his daily work. He records that in 1830 he travelled 3,924 miles, the following year 4,356 miles and preached 271 sermons. In 1834 he travelled over 4,000 miles and preached 300 sermons. At the end of another year he writes that he travelled only 3,011 miles but had some excellent results in that he established 20 preaching places, formed 7 classes, and admitted 121 members into the church.

Rev. M. Hauert in travelling on his circuit in Illinois in 1838 found that the distance from one preaching point to another was 130 miles and in another part of the same circuit he travelled 150 miles to reach a single appointment. An extract from the diary of the Rev. John G. Zinser will indicate some of the additional hardships incident to travelling a circuit beyond the mere strenuous exertion of riding many miles. He wrote about a journey to a camp meeting on August 25, 1835:

"In the morning I went on and had a bad mountainous road to travel. I rode forty-three miles, while it rained nearly all day very fast. As the distance was great and the roads very rough, I had to ride for several hours in the night. I had to go through a thick forest, where it was so dark that I had to dismount in order to find the road with my feet. At last I reached the desired place, but to my sorrow I found nobody at home, and all the doors were locked. With great difficulty I found a stable and hay for my horse, and then tried to find another house where I might stay. I wandered in the great darkness through the fields, while it rained still heavily, but could not find a

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<sup>5</sup> YR, p. 59f.

house because I was unacquainted here. Finally I became confused, so that I could scarcely find my way back to the former place. Then I went into the barn, took off part of my wet clothing, and knelt down to pray. . . . It was now midnight. I then found a corner of hay where I sat down to sleep but slept very little. At daybreak I arose and rode three miles further and at last to my great joy reached the camp ground. Fortunately I suffered no damage to my health. In the afternoon I preached on 2 Peter 2: 9."<sup>6</sup>

Exposure frequently caused the premature death of these itinerants who, like their founder, cared less for their own well being than for the salvation of their friends and neighbors. The Rev. John Roessner almost froze to death while on horseback on a bitter cold wintry day, and upon dismounting, fainted. He soon contracted tuberculosis and died in 1836 after having been able to spend only four years in the active ministry. On January 14, 1836, Seybert had an appointment to preach in Mahantango Valley in Pennsylvania which required the crossing of a mountain which was very difficult to scale in any season. The snow was deep, but he rode on until he was forced to dismount and break a path for his horse. When he reached the summit he found the road on the north side impassable and so started down on a straight path through the woods, finally reaching his destination exhausted, but not too exhausted to preach that night and to lead one soul to God.<sup>7</sup> On another occasion he found the Schuylkill river flooded and standers-by advised him not to try a crossing. But he had an appointment on the other side and as Bishop Asbury and Henry Boehm had done before him, Seybert knelt on his saddle and his faithful horse swam the flood tide and brought him safely to his preaching place. During his visits in Ohio, Seybert contracted malaria fever which for more than a year disabled him considerably. The next year he was subject to a severe attack of the fever while riding through a long stretch of woods. He was compelled to stop, turned his horse loose, and prepared his bed from the horse blanket and the saddle. Before lying down he tried to pray but fainted in the attempt and sank on his improvised couch. In due time the crisis of the fever passed and he continued on his way.<sup>8</sup>

Equal to the needs of the German people and the difficulties and hardships involved in travelling in the early nineteenth century were the sense of responsibility and the courage of these circuit-riders of the Evangelical Association and other denominations who spared not themselves that the gospel might be preached in all the new West.

<sup>6</sup> Diary of Rev. John G. Zinser quoted in *YH*(1), p. 233.

<sup>7</sup> Spreng, S. P., *The Life and Labors of John Seybert*, Cleveland, 1888, p. 157f.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73f.

#### 49. THE IMPORTANT FORMATIVE GENERAL CONFERENCES

The six sessions of the general conference held respectively in 1830, 1835, 1836, 1839, 1843, and 1847, determined more largely than the general conference sessions of any other period the form, polity and doctrine which were to be the very foundation of the Evangelical Association.

##### a. The General Conference of 1830

The major reason for the session of the General Conference of 1830 was the revision of the *Discipline*, a new edition of which was to be printed in the German, and for the first time also in the English language. Since there was no disciplinary regulation before 1839 forbidding the alteration of the Articles of Faith, the general conference of 1830 was entirely within its province when it amended the Articles of Faith by deleting the articles "On the Marriage of Preachers" and "On the Oath of a Christian." A beautiful touch of local color lies back of the changing of the word "sacrament" or "sacraments" to the specific sacrament or sacraments intended, either baptism or the Lord's Supper. Among the German people of that day a favorite curse word and an emphatic way of swearing was the use of the Latin word "sacramentum" or in some localities the Pennsylvania German derivative "sacermens." Lest their unlettered members might associate a feeling of repulsion with the use of the word "sacrament" it was thought best to drop it entirely. After recording that the *Discipline* had been examined and improved, the minutes state that John Seybert and Thomas Buck, both presiding elders and apparently leaders in making the revisions, were appointed to transcribe the improved portions and to arrange them properly for publication. The minutes contain no record of the revisions made, but by later action John Dreisbach and Henry Niebel the older and more conservative leaders, were added to the committee, probably as an act of precaution, with instructions to examine thoroughly the entire work prior to its publication.

Since the church had had some unfortunate controversies with several of its English preachers and since preachers who spoke only the English language were severely limited in the number of circuits they could fill, the fourth general conference voted to receive no more preachers into the travelling connection who were not somewhat proficient in the German language. Because of the effect of this action and its importance in relation to other legislation on the same subject by later conferences during this period the entire German-English controversy will be treated in a separate paragraph later in this chapter.

Since the Western Conference was still largely dependent upon the Eastern Conference this general conference ruled that hereafter a pre-



siding elder of the Western Conference shall attend the Eastern Conference annually in order to bring the necessary documents and to facilitate the transaction of business of mutual interest.

At first thought it appears a bit irrelevant that this general conference should also have placed rather severe limitations on the episcopacy at a time when the church had no bishop. It was decided that a bishop should not be eligible for election for more than two terms of four years each, and the form for the ordination of a bishop which had been added to the *Discipline* by the General Conference of 1816 was deleted. Since there were no limitations whatsoever upon the powers of Jacob Albright, he stationed the preachers as he wished and at any time when he thought it most advantageous for the work. In 1830 it was decided that this power was too great to be entrusted to a single individual and so a law was enacted placing the responsibility of stationing the preachers and presiding elders upon the bishop in consultation with and by the help of the presiding elders. The occasion for this legislation is scarcely to be found in the imminence of the election of a bishop, for it was nine years before the next bishop was elected. The occasion for this legislation is rather to be found in the action of other churches using the episcopal form of government. In other churches using the episcopal form of government, especially in the Methodist Church, there was a growing feeling of dissatisfaction with the absolute powers vested in the episcopacy. Just two years before, the first steps had been taken by a number of very prominent Methodist clergymen to limit the powers of the episcopacy, and to establish lay representation, which finally led to a schism in the Methodist Church and the establishment of the Methodist Protestant Church. In 1829 this body, not yet fully constitutionally organized and consisting of about five thousand members, made unsuccessful overtures for a union with The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, which church in 1825 had dropped the ordination of their bishops<sup>9</sup> and was laying great stress upon the place of laymen in all parts of its church organization.

#### b. The General Conference of 1835

Since the first sessions of the general conferences invariably were held at the call of the Eastern Conference which had largely perpetuated the original conference, lengths of the intervals between its sessions were not always uniform. In this case the interval was four and a half years and it was to be but a year and a half between the fifth and sixth sessions of the general conferences. Nineteen delegates gathered in the church at Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania, in May, 1835, to constitute the fifth General Conference, and to transact business for the entire church.

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<sup>9</sup> Drury, A. W., *op. cit.*, p. 343.

Somerset, Indiana and Erie Circuits were cut from the Eastern Conference and added to the Western Conference, where they were united with Canton Circuit to form a new presiding elder district. The following year the Western Conference re-grouped its fields of labor into three districts and in this respect was now like the Eastern Conference. The time for the sessions of the Eastern and Western Conferences was changed from May and June to the first and fourth Mondays in March respectively. The annual conference of local preachers which was to be held preceding the session of the regular annual conference, but which had never functioned properly, was discontinued and in its stead this general conference ordered that local preacher conferences shall be held on every circuit where there are several such preachers, and clearly prescribed the rules for such meetings. Every circuit and station was ordered to keep a proper record of the minutes of all its quarterly conferences. The Historical Society is fortunate in having two such record books, the one from Orwigsburg and the other from the old Gettysburg Circuit, which date back to this very year, 1835.

*Der Christliche Botschafter* and the Charitable Society were established by this general conference and will be discussed respectively in the succeeding paragraphs on "Publishing Interests" and "Societies Organized." In 1832, three years before, the first Sunday School in the Evangelical Association was founded in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and a number of other Sunday Schools had sprung up meanwhile. This fifth general conference took cognizance of this growing movement and required German Sabbath Schools to be introduced into the societies wherever practicable and made it obligatory for the preachers in charge to take an active interest in this matter.

### c. The General Conference of 1836

For some time a number of ministers were convinced that the church should establish a new printing plant and book bindery and, now that *Der Christliche Botschafter* was actually being issued each month (beginning January, 1836), and since the newly established Sunday Schools needed printed materials, the matter seemed of sufficient importance to the Eastern Conference to call the sixth session of the general conference to be held in November, 1836. The home of John Ferner in Somerset County across the Alleghenies was designated as the place of meeting, which designation, because of the distance and the difficulties of travel, accounted in part for the comparatively small number of nineteen delegates who met to enact very important legislation. They were not the identical nineteen who had met the year previous but among them were the major leaders of the church and one comparatively young man, the Rev. Jacob Schnerr, who had been responsible for the founding of the first Sunday School in the denomination and was also the

first preacher on the first station (single, self-supporting appointment), when it was established in Philadelphia in 1835. But Schnerr, whose health was rapidly failing, would not allow mountains or ill health to interfere with his attendance at a general conference where his beloved Sunday Schools and their literature were to be discussed.

It requires little imagination to see those pioneer preachers riding to the general conference over the old Forbes Road, which was constructed across the Alleghenies in 1758 to enable the British to dislodge the French from Fort Duquesne and to open the Ohio Valley to English settlement. General Braddock had suffered a disastrous defeat by the French and Indians near Pittsburgh in 1755 which had exposed the entire Pennsylvania frontier to the incursions of the Indians and led to the massacre of more than two thousand of her people. This sixth general conference met in the Ferner house which had been built shortly after the completion of the Forbes Road. By that old house, 42 by 26 feet, had passed Bouquet's two expeditions against the Indians in 1763 and 1768, the Continental Troops on their marches to Pittsburgh during the Revolution, the United States Army under General St. Clair to its defeat by the Miami Indians in 1791, and the army under General Wayne in 1792 which conquered the Indians and opened the Northwest Territory for settlement. A generation later the work of the Evangelical Association was so well established in Somerset County that the General Conference of 1836 was called to convene in this, one of its first preaching places.

Although this session, from Monday November 14th to Saturday November 19th, had been called primarily to reestablish the publishing house and a book bindery, a very strong group insisted that the venture was unsafe, impractical and at that time premature. The attention of the general conference was called to the previous failure of a similar project and no efforts were spared to have the matter dropped. W. W. Orwig, who was present, and always much interested in the publishing work of the church, wrote that even the warmest advocates and friends of the enterprise vacillated at one time during the discussion, but that when they had recovered their enthusiasm, they sponsored the printing venture with all the arguments at their command, and barely succeeded in carrying the issue to begin a new plant in New Berlin, Pennsylvania.

The general conference immediately placed an order for four thousand copies of the small hymn book, the *Viole*, and for two thousand copies of J. C. Reisner's German school book, designed, in part at least, to meet the needs of many of the newly established Sunday Schools.

The two annual conferences were declared entirely independent of each other except for the support of the preachers which responsibility was shared mutually for three more years. Until this time the Western Conference had been dependent upon the Eastern Conference which



had the power to approve or reject its minutes which had to be submitted annually. In 1832 the Eastern Conference exercised this power when it vetoed the Western Conference's selection of Joseph Long as a presiding elder "to travel according to his ability."<sup>10</sup>

This conference made it a disciplinary requirement that ministers shall give recommendations to those members who move from one circuit to another. This was not designed to transfer members to other denominations but rather to facilitate the moving of members from one class to another and to prevent the loss of those members who without proper introductions might move into new areas. The form adopted read: "This is to certify that A..... B..... is a member of our Evangelical Association. ....Cir. N..... N..... preacher in charge. ....A.D. 18....."<sup>11</sup> The failure to follow this rule adopted in 1836 has lost many members to the Evangelical Association.

Entire freedom was granted to members of the church regarding baptism. The method of baptism to be used was purely optional and a person who had been previously baptized might be baptized again if he so desired.

Probably due to the growing feeling of equality among the conferences, the general conference itself set the date for its next meeting in March, 1839, and the place designated was Centre County, Pennsylvania. Previously this prerogative had been assumed alone by the Eastern Conference, although the Western Conference changed the date of opening for the General Conference of 1843.

#### d. The General Conference of 1839

The work of the Evangelical Association had grown so large and its churches and membership had become so widely scattered that the thirty-one delegates attending the seventh session of the general conference at Mosser's Church, three miles southwest of Millheim, Pennsylvania, on March 25, 1839, decided that a bishop should be elected in order to properly supervise and direct the general interests of the church. Still sensing the dangers involved in the episcopal system, the discussion of which had consumed considerable time in previous general conferences and, nine years before, provoked limitations on the powers of bishops, this conference prepared to limit still further the power of the bishop now that one was actually to be selected. Heretofore a bishop was authorized with the assistance of two presiding elders to assign the fields of labor to the preachers, and to station the presiding elders to their districts in the annual conferences or even among

<sup>10</sup> Yeakel, R., *Bishop Joseph Long*, Cleveland, 1897, p. 50f.

<sup>11</sup> *BL*, p. 86.

the conferences and in the interval of the conferences to transfer either presiding elders or preachers according to his best judgment. This general conference decided that the bishop with the assistance of the presiding elders shall assign to the preachers their fields of labor at the time of the annual sessions of the conferences, and then only within the bounds of their respective conferences.

John Seybert was elected the second bishop of the denomination. Although perhaps not the greatest preacher, Seybert was universally recognized among his brethren as first in diligence, devotion, humility and executive ability. The fact that his election to the highest office in the church came to him as a complete surprise and the beautiful spirit of humility in which he received it are shown by the following entry in his *Journal*:

"Wednesday being the third day of the session, a Bishop was elected about five o'clock in the afternoon. This important office unexpectedly fell to my lot, which oppressed me, and on account of the importance of the office, caused me to shed tears. My appetite failed, and sleep left me for a season. Gradually I felt relieved again, and felt disposed to submit myself to God and to my brethren, and formed the determination to serve the church in the faithful performance of the important duties of the office, and to labor for the glory of God and the welfare of my fellow pilgrims to eternity."<sup>12</sup>

Of Bishop Seybert's election the Rev. Absalom B. Schaefer, of the Western Conference, and one of the stronger men of the church of this period wrote in his diary:

"The election of Brother John Seybert to the office of Bishop, was to me very remarkable and solemn. It seemed he had not expected it, but when it was announced that John Seybert had been elected as Bishop of the Evangelical Association he arose and walked back into one of the last pews, bowed down and wept for a time. Afterwards he arose, came forward and said, 'I have promised God to be obedient, and since the brethren have elected me to be overseer I will acquiesce, but I realize that I lack that fitness for this weighty office which my older brethren possess (he was just approaching forty-eight), you must, therefore, pray for me and have patience with me.' This and other utterances of his came evidently from the heart, and made such an impression that the whole conference was melted to tears. At this episcopal election I saw how necessary it is that the office seek the man and not the man the office."<sup>13</sup>

Although Seybert was a very simple man and wore the plainest of clothes, sometimes even threadbare and patched, his selection as a bishop proved to be a most happy one, as the results of his decisions

<sup>12</sup> Neitz, S., *op. cit.*, p. 215f, and Spreng, S. P., *John Seybert*, p. 196.

<sup>13</sup> Schaefer's *Journal*, quoted in *YH*(1), p. 289.

and especially of his extensive travels and friendly visitations indicate.

This epoch-making conference also limited its own power severely, a matter to which the Church of the United Brethren in Christ had attended as early as 1833. Hitherto the general conference had unlimited power, but the General Conference of 1839 adopted a constitution and decided that hereafter no disciplinary changes shall be made, except according to the rules specified in it. The committee which guided this important legislation consisted of John Seybert, Joseph Long and George Brickley. Henceforth, the general conference was permitted by its own vote to change regulations in the sections of the *Discipline* dealing with the temporal economy, but all basic constitutional changes must have the consent of two-thirds of the members of all the annual conferences. It also limited itself somewhat in that it could do nothing in conflict with the constitution of the Missionary Society which was a child of its own creation.

One of the most momentous actions of this general conference was its fixing of the Articles of Faith in permanent form and forbidding any future change in them. By 1847 this action was clarified to read, "The general conference shall have no power to alter, detract from, or add to any of our Articles of Faith," and four years later it was modified by the phrase "except with regard to the administration of other nations." This latter phrase covers Article 17 which is the only article in the *Discipline* which at present is subject to change. Thomas Buck, W. W. Orwig and Charles Hammer were appointed to correct the grammatical and typographical errors in the church *Discipline*.

Regarding this very far-reaching legislation, Reuben Yeakel wrote:

"The Articles of Faith contain all the unchangeable foundational doctrines of Holy Scripture, consequently it is perfectly and logically just they should be constitutionally unchangeable among us. If an edifice is to stand, then above all things, its foundation must be immovable. If it were allowed to move its basal stones to and fro, how soon it would tumble down!—If in a Church the cardinal doctrines are left subject to change then how soon will various 'winds of doctrine' arise to toss the people to and fro and cause confusion. Against such possibilities of evil, safe provisions have thus been made."<sup>14</sup>

Slight verbal changes were made in the Articles of Faith by the General Conferences of 1847, 1851, 1855, 1859, 1867, 1871, 1875, and 1879. Since then there have been no changes except that Article 17 was changed in 1934, which, of course, was constitutional since it dealt with the article concerning civil governments.

The manufacture of spirituous liquors for any purpose other than medicinal was now strictly prohibited among the members of the

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<sup>14</sup> YH(1), p. 292.



church as was also the ownership of or the trading in slaves. Charles Hammer was elected the first general agent or publisher at a salary equal to the editor's. Regarding the printing establishment it was ordered that the publication of *Der Christliche Botschafter* shall be semi-monthly instead of monthly beginning in 1840 with the slight increase in price of twenty-five cents per subscription. Three committees, one the book committee, another the committee for examining new works that may be offered for publication, and a third for selecting and preparing Sabbath School books, were appointed. A stereotyped German pocket Bible, together with six thousand copies of a German primer (*Anfangsbuch*) and a number of Sunday School Books were ordered printed. This conference also took the first steps toward printing a History of the Evangelical Association.

Since the two annual conferences had grown so large, it was decided to group the church into three conferences. Consequently the old conferences ceased to exist at this session and the newly formed conferences, East Pennsylvania, West Pennsylvania and Ohio Conferences rightfully date their beginnings to 1840. The preachers were given the privilege of choosing to which of the new conferences they wished to belong. Some chose and others gave themselves unconditionally into the hands of the appointive powers. Despite the fact that a bishop no longer had the power to transfer a minister from one conference to the other, it was possible for ministers who wished to do so to change their relationship when they wished, as for example, the Rev. Jacob Burkhart who in 1846 withdrew from the East Pennsylvania Conference, upon his ordination as an elder that year, to join the Ohio Conference.<sup>15</sup> A later conference (1851) once again gave the bishop the right to transfer preachers from one conference to another provided the preacher and the presiding elders of the districts concerned consented.<sup>16</sup>

This general conference also decided that thereafter the general conference shall be composed of delegates in the ratio of one to every four ministers of each annual conference, which would limit the size of the general conference and assure the presence of the best ministers of the denomination at its sessions. The missionary work was enthusiastically supported not only by sanctioning the recently founded Missionary Society but also by the introduction of a section into the *Discipline* on the "Support of Missions." For the first time the parity in financial support among the ministers, which had existed from the very beginning of the church, was lifted. Since the living expenses of ministers and missionaries in the larger cities were commonly accepted as being very much higher than in other localities, it was left to the decision of each annual

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<sup>15</sup> *BL*, p. 112.

<sup>16</sup> *BL*, p. 132.

conference to set the salaries of these persons at a figure which they deemed necessary. This was the beginning of a change in the matter of fixing salaries which was soon to give the local congregation a voice in fixing of the salaries of its ministers. Following the custom now established, the general conference adjourned to meet in November, 1843 on Tabor District in Ohio.

"This conference was characterized by great zeal for the cause of God," as W. W. Orwig puts it.

"It was animated not by that timid, diffident, faithless, and fainting spirit which never dares do or undertake much for God's kingdom, but by a bold enterprising spirit, that took hold not only of the majority of the ministry, but also of some of the societies and members. It was particularly the missionary spirit which filled the whole Association in those days; and this spirit called forth and fostered, as it always does, a deep interest in all the enterprises having the glory of God for their object."<sup>17</sup>

#### e. The General Conference of 1843

Through increased efficiency due to the rules of procedure which it adopted at the beginning, the eighth general conference in session in Greensburg, Ohio, October 23 to November 2, 1843, was able to transact 107 items of business during eleven days of its sitting. This was the first delegated general conference and consisted of 32 members representing about 130 ministers in the three annual conferences. More than two weeks before the opening of the session, Charles Hesser in company with Henry Fisher, J. M. Saylor and M. F. Maize, all of the East Pennsylvania Conference, started for the conference on October 6th in a two-horse carriage. The following day they dined with D. Zartman in Northumberland County. In descending a hill beyond this place the tongue of the carriage became detached, annoyed the horses and caused one of them to kick so violently that he broke the leg of Charles Hesser who was driving and doing his best to quiet the horses in this emergency. The entire general conference was much saddened because five days later Mr. Hesser died. While Mr. Hesser was buried in Orwigsburg, October 15th, the general conference also conducted an appropriate service in his memory.

Apparently some reason must have arisen after the East Pennsylvania Conference had met in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, on March 22d, for changing the time of the general conference. At the session of the West Pennsylvania Conference on April 15th, and at the session of the Ohio Conference on May 10th, a resolution was passed without comment changing the date of this general conference from November, as it had determined four years before, to October 23d. This change of date

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<sup>17</sup> OH, p. 266.

may have been due to a desire for better weather for crossing the mountains into Ohio or even perhaps to accommodate the bishop, John Seybert, in some of his preaching plans, for the bishop started an extensive preaching tour immediately after the session of this general conference. At any rate the decision to change the time of meeting was done by a majority of the annual conferences and in each case in the presence of the bishop. There is, therefore, no reason to infer that the other conferences might now be asserting a right which the old Eastern Conference had previously exercised in calling all general conferences before 1839. While a few individuals may have occasionally through the years tried to hold priority of origin and, therefore, priority of influence for the East Pennsylvania Conference it is agreed that the three conferences established by the General Conference of 1839 are of exactly the same age, since all previous conferences ceased to exist at that time.

Most of the recommendations of the annual conferences regarding changes in the *Discipline* were adopted including an amendment to the section defining the powers of the general conference. Some changes were also made in the rules for admission of preachers, and in the duties of class-leaders and local preachers. The salaries of the ministers and general officers were raised and better arrangements were made for the support of superannuated and disabled ministers and their families. Although this did not mean that all the ministers received their salaries in full, it actually brought their standard of living to a more reasonable level.

Recognition of the growing need for proper care of the English-speaking people and especially the children of the older members who preferred to speak English led this general conference to pass a resolution to pay more attention to the English-speaking population, and to labor for their spiritual interests. It was also decided that if ten ministers should request it at any time an English Conference could be formed. The English hymn book was ordered to be enlarged, and it was decided to publish an English paper as soon as practicable. Since English was rapidly becoming the predominating language, especially in Central and Western Pennsylvania, this legislation is at least partially responsible for the rapid growth of the West Pennsylvania Conference thereafter. However, it was not the intention of this conference to neglect the German-speaking population. In this very year Bishop Seybert had discovered that in a population of 30,000 persons in St. Louis, Missouri, at least one-third of them were German. The total membership of the church was now 13,070, with 4,372 in the East Pennsylvania Conference, 4,508 in the West Pennsylvania Conference and 4,190 in the Ohio Conference.



Since the area of the denomination had become too large to be covered properly by one bishop in his travels, it was decided to elect two bishops, and accordingly John Seybert and Joseph Long were selected. Their salary was set at the same figure as a regular itinerant preacher's income. The general conference, in the case of the selection of bishops, asked those nominated as fitted for the office, to retire. In this case it must have been a discussion of about two hours in which the merits of the respective candidates were considered for John Seybert wrote in his *Journal* regarding this interval:

"Today I was for two hours and fourteen minutes relieved of the office of bishop, that being the exact time from the moment when my term of service was declared to have expired, to the moment when I was declared reelected."<sup>18</sup>

At this session of the conference, Joseph Long preached one of the most effective sermons of his career on *1 Timothy 2: 5-6*. Long was one of the strongest preachers in the church and had excellent executive ability. When he was but thirty years of age he was chosen to preside over the important General Conference of 1830, which so largely formulated the Articles of Faith. Bishop Long was about six feet two inches in height, scrupulously neat about his person, studious, deeply devotional and orderly in his conduct of worship and leadership in a conference session.

What hardship his election to the episcopacy brought to his wife and family and how seriously Joseph Long took this great responsibility is shown in part in his *Journal*, which is preserved only in scattered sections:

"December 23, 1843. This day I started on my journey to the East as overseer, and took leave of my family and weeping Catharine with a heavy heart. After I had bridled my horse, I went once more into the feed entry, knelt down by the straw-cutter, and there recalled how God in past years had repeatedly heard my prayers at this place, beseeching God with deep feelings and hot tears. I committed myself and mine, and especially Catharine, to Him, who has said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' Then I went on my journey, and in the evening arrived at the house of David Martin, in Freedom, Pennsylvania, (thirty-four miles distant) and preached to an attentive congregation on 2 Cor. 5: 14-15."<sup>19</sup>

How different his ride of exactly the same distance at fifteen miles per hour must have seemed the following year when on January 19, 1844, he was on his way to Baltimore to inspect the work there. He

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<sup>18</sup> Spreng, S. P., *Life of Seybert*, p. 253.

<sup>19</sup> Yeakel, R., *Bishop Joseph Long*, p. 60.

had rarely ridden in a railroad car and wrote in his *Journal* about that trip:

"I was brought to the railroad and seated myself in a car at ten minutes after four o'clock in the afternoon, and arrived at Baltimore at half past six (thirty-four miles) safe and well preserved, and Brother Hammer took me to his house."<sup>20</sup>

Both Bishops Long and Seybert rarely used the trains until their later years, when Bishop Long was more frequently induced to travel this quicker and more comfortable way. No doubt frugality had much to do with their riding on horse-back, although Bishop Seybert frequently asserted that he preferred the saddle because then he was able to stop to visit and give counsel to his members and friends along the way.

Although there was by no means unanimity on the matter of the educational qualifications of the clergy, and in spite of the fact that there were strong prejudices against an educated ministry, especially among the laity, who for generations had lived under spiritual impoverishment at the hands of an educated but unspiritual clergy, this general conference, nevertheless, highly recommended learning to all ministers and candidates for the ministry and laid down a plan of studies for the young preachers. After the conference a manifesto on this subject prepared by the general conference was printed in *Der Christliche Botschafter* over the signatures of the bishops and the secretary of the general conference. The general conference, reviving its previous action, ordered a continued effort to produce a history of the church, which had not matured during the preceding quadrennium. W. W. Orwig was ordered to prepare a catechism, for the instruction of the young, based on the fundamental doctrines as taught in the Articles of Faith of the Evangelical Association. This second *Catechism*, and the first original work of its kind in the denomination, appeared in 1847.

After proper editing George Miller's *Practical Christianity*, which first appeared in print in 1814, was ordered reissued and the two German hymn books, the *Saitenspiel* and the *Viole*, were ordered to be condensed and printed in a stereotyped edition. This selection of the hymns from the former popular German hymnals was to have been done by the new officers of the Printing Establishment, Adam Ettinger, the editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*, and J. C. Reisner, the general agent, but it was never accomplished and four years later a different procedure was adopted. It was reported to the conference that the net worth of the publishing plant, established but seven years before, was now almost \$28,000.

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

Since the work of the Ohio Conference had been extended over the territory of several states, which made the supervision of the work and the attendance of the preachers at the annual meetings very difficult, it was decided in 1843 that those portions of the Ohio Conference lying in Indiana and Illinois shall hereafter be known as the Illinois Conference. New names, largely of geographical derivation, were assigned to the presiding elder districts in the various conferences, instead of the more fictitious Biblical terms which had previously been applied to these areas. The time of meeting for the annual conferences was also rearranged.

This general conference of 1843 received a committee of two fraternal delegates sent by the Methodist Episcopal Church to bring a proposal for establishing closer friendship between the two churches so that they might be enabled to lend each other aid, fight with better success against the enemies of the cross, and labor for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the neglected German people of this country. J. F. Wright, N. Calender and William Nast were the delegates appointed by the General Conference of the Methodist Church held in 1840 to represent their church, but only the last two attended the general conference at Greensburg. No one is quite sure whether the Methodists intended an ultimate union with the Evangelical Association or whether this visit was but an attempt to establish advantageous relations in temporal affairs such as publishing materials in the German language.

During the quadrennium John Dreisbach was selected to represent the Evangelical Association at the meetings of the "Evangelical Alliance" which was held in London, England, beginning August 19, 1846, but due to illness he was unable to attend. Much interest in this gathering had been shown throughout the church. The general conference ordered that the interest accruing from the Charitable Society funds and the profits from the printing establishment were to be divided in equal shares among the annual conferences and that each conference should thereafter support its own claimants or dependents. The Charitable Society was advised to lend \$1,200 to the congregation at Philadelphia and \$300 to the congregation at Rochester, provided they could give ample security and reliable assurances of paying the interest annually. The old conference record, including the minutes from the first conference onward and until then in the possession of the East Pennsylvania Conference, was set apart as a record for the proceedings of the general conference only, and was to be kept in custody by the book establishment. This volume is now in the vaults of the Publishing House in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where it forms the most valuable single source extant for the history of the denomination. The following East Pennsylvania Conference appointed the Rev. Frederick Kreckler to make abstracts of the proceedings of the former sessions of the old confer-



ence and transcribe them in a new volume. This volume is now in the archives of the Historical Society.

#### f. The General Conference of 1847

Forty-one delegates attended the opening meeting of the ninth session of the general conference held at New Berlin, Pennsylvania, on the 29th of September, 1847. After spending nearly five days in an investigation of the official conduct of Adam Ettinger, the editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*, and J. C. Reisner, the general publishing agent, both of New Berlin, for living in discord during their official term, the general conference reproved them for their contentious conduct, deprived them of their rights as delegates of that general conference and disqualified them for reelection to office at that session. The conference also required them to become reconciled, amend their ways and live peaceably thereafter.

Ettinger withdrew from the church and at the next session of the East Pennsylvania Conference, the Rev. J. C. Reisner located "on account of temporal circumstances." Eight years later Reisner was admitted into that conference again as a preacher on trial. On several occasions Ettinger had presented claims to the general conference maintaining that he had not been dealt with justly. Both the General Conferences of 1851 and 1855 repudiated this assertion, however. After some lengthy discussions the General Conference of 1859 finally voted to receive Ettinger once more as an elder in the church, the relation he had sustained twelve years before. The reconciliation of the Rev. Adam Ettinger with the older members of that conference is very touchingly described in the minutes. Bishop Long not only clasped hands with Ettinger but embraced him and Ettinger wept on the shoulders of several of his older associates with whom he had spent so many years as an itinerant and editor.

On recommendation by the annual conferences it was voted that a preacher on probation in the itinerancy shall not be allowed to marry during such probation. Every preacher was ordered to be diligent in the establishing of Sunday Schools. Apparently to save time the conference then decided to vote *viva voce* rather than by rising as they had previously done.

For the first time in the history of the church, it was resolved to establish an educational institution, a seminary for general sciences, but the final decision in the matter was referred to a vote of the entire membership of the church. The vote was unfavorable, largely because there had been no well established plan for taking the ballot throughout the church, despite the fact that the general conference had ordered every preacher to take a ballot on this matter that year, after due announcement, and that every member should have the privilege of voting.

Sensing the great need of retaining John Seybert in the episcopacy, the general conference voted that thereafter the bishops shall be elected from among the members of the general conference and not only from among the persiding elders as before, and that a bishop shall always be eligible for reëlection. This saved Bishop Seybert for the episcopacy. He had already completed two terms which had been set as the limit for holding office in the episcopacy. Consequently he and Bishop Long were reëlected. Nicholas Gehr was elected the editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and of the newly established *Evangelical Messenger*. W. Bersch was named as his assistant. Henry Fisher was chosen as the general publishing agent and the salaries of the men at the publishing house were set at \$225 and \$15 additional for each child under fourteen years of age. Upon the recommendation of the West Pennsylvania Conference the general conference voted to establish *The Evangelical Messenger* as a semi-monthly English periodical as soon as eight hundred subscribers could be secured. The first issue appeared under the date of January 8, 1848. Adam Ettinger was commissioned to complete the history of the church begun by John Dreisbach but was unable to do so during the quadrennium.

From the portions of the East Pennsylvania Conference lying in Canada and New York State (except New York City) the New York Conference was formed, making the fifth conference of the church. Once more the question of an English Conference was raised and it was decided that any conference having twenty English preachers should be permitted to organize an English Conference which should then have equal rights with other conferences. That such an organization was not formed is not an indication that the English work was falling off but rather that it was more widely extending itself and was being so well received in the old conference organizations that there was nothing to be gained by a separate organization. The fact is that such separation of English and German preachers might have caused a division of feeling and hindered the future granting of privileges for the advancement of the work among English-speaking people.

One of the most interesting institutions of the early church which was apparently falling somewhat into disuse was the class meeting. Accordingly this general conference made it obligatory upon every class leader "to hold a class meeting at least once every four weeks." This did not refer to a simple prayer service but meant a thorough examination of the membership of the class, according to the teachings of the *Discipline*. The leader of each class was supposed to call each member of the class by name and inquire about his spiritual condition, and whether he felt any growth in grace. To each individual the leader then gave such advice as seemed necessary and suitable for the promotion of his spiritual life. With such power entrusted to the class

leaders, one may well see why their functions should be clearly defined and closely regulated by the *Discipline*, as controlled by the general conference. In addition to these examinations by the class leader, the itinerant preachers conducted at least four similar investigations on each charge each year. This was done usually without notice at the end of a brief sermon, and being of a more thorough nature, these questionings of the preacher sometimes assumed the proportion of a cross-examination in a civil court. Many members who were careless or indifferent soon fell away under such testing and consequently the membership of the church grew slowly. On the other hand, many who had grown indifferent to religious matters, were aroused to new zeal by such procedure, and one may be very sure that the members reported on church rolls in those days were all accounted for and in very good standing. Opponents of the denomination and of this method sometimes accused the church of using the confessional like the Roman Catholic Church. Of these meetings Reuben Yeakel writes:

"Zealous Christians greatly appreciated these meetings, they served generally as a blessed means of grace. No class meeting passed without tears of penitence and also of joy, and not infrequently the praises of God arose from heart and tongue for the great things God was doing among his people. The preachers themselves realized great benefit, they would thereby become better acquainted with the spiritual condition of their members, and were thus enabled to prepare their sermons and direct their pastoral labors accordingly." <sup>21</sup>

Although the Church of the United Brethren in Christ as early as 1829 had disapproved of secret societies and Free-Masonry in particular, so as to exclude Masons from the church,<sup>22</sup> they came to no final conclusion in the matter for as late as 1881 the question was still being warmly discussed.

The Evangelical Association gave its first lengthy discussion to the matter at this General Conference of 1847. Very concise action had been taken by each of the annual conferences just preceding the general conference which plainly showed the general opinion in the church to be against oath-bound orders. The Ohio Conference took the most decisive action of all since it had the case of one of its ministers for consideration. They resolved,

"That (N.N.) shall withdraw from the order of Free-Masons and procure a certificate of dismissal from them, which shall then be published; in case this is not accomplished he can no longer serve as preacher among us. But should he not be able to obtain said certificate, the conference requires the testimony of two men appointed for this purpose that he has withdrawn, for the purpose of publication." <sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> YH(1), p. 389.

<sup>22</sup> Drury, A. W., *op. cit.*, p. 344 and p. 481.

<sup>23</sup> YH(1), p. 384.



The latter solution was carried out and the minister was retained in the conference.

Both the East Pennsylvania and West Pennsylvania Conferences at their sessions preceding the general conference had passed resolutions recommending that the general conference enact a law forbidding any member of the church to belong to an oath-bound society. The resolution of the East Pennsylvania Conference had been drawn up by Bishop Long, Henry Fisher and Francis Hoffman. After some discussion this memorial from East Pennsylvania was ruled out on the basis of its unconstitutional manner of presentation. Finally the matter was precipitated, however, when John Dreisbach and Henry Niebel, the two oldest ministers in the church presented a prohibitory resolution which, although opposed by a group of influential leaders, was promptly passed. No sooner was the result announced than the Rev. J. M. Saylor of the East Pennsylvania Conference arose and said:

"Brethren, I belong to the Sons of Temperance, which is an oath-bound order. We find secrecy necessary to lay our plans and carry on our work to keep ahead of the whiskey men. The resolution you passed will cut off all the temperance workers from the Church, which is wrong, and I for one, cannot go with you in that law." <sup>24</sup>

Immediately following, the Rev. J. P. Leib, of the same conference, arose and said that while some secret societies might be inimical to the church and the public welfare, he knew of others that were very helpful and beneficial and that he thought it was not within the province of the church to place a ban on all alike. He said he counted the new law an invasion of the conscience and private rights of the people and that he would not belong to a church governed by such a narrow law. Consequently he announced his withdrawal from the church. W. W. Orwig, usually a very conservative leader of the general conference and at that time its secretary, pleaded for the rescinding of the motion on the ground that it would work disaster and was already proving inexpedient. But the aged leaders were not minded to compromise and Henry Niebel rose asking the conference to stand by its action, which he felt was the predominating sentiment throughout the church. He maintained that dissenting members should submit to the will of the majority, and said he in an unguarded moment of over enthusiasm, "If they will not submit, let them go, we can get along without them." This sharp censure brought forth a murmur of disapproval from the conference and the crisis was over. John Dreisbach rose with tears in his eyes saying:

"I offered the resolution in good faith, and while it represents the views of the majority of the Church, I feel we ought to respect the

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<sup>24</sup> *SF*, p. 6.

conscience of the brethren who differ from us. If it were a matter of faith, I would not yield, but on a matter like this we must be yielding (*nachgebig*)."

Then after expressing his sorrow at what had occurred, he asked that the resolution be reconsidered, which was granted and peace and harmony were restored.<sup>25</sup>

The opposition to secret societies was probably based on the aversion which these pietistic German people had for any object or order which in any slight way might show evidence of placing a shadow upon the supremacy of Jesus Christ and his church, or hide any fact or even thought from the close scrutiny and examination of the very strict class meetings.

## 50. THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MOVEMENT

The first religious schools in this country, some of which were conducted on Sundays, were isolated efforts such as those of the Pilgrim Fathers at Roxbury, Massachusetts, in 1674, at Plymouth in 1680, and among the Seventh Day Baptists at the Cloisters near Ephrata, Pennsylvania, in 1747. The real impetus to the Sunday School movement however remained to be given by the introduction of the Robert Raikes' schools from England. Robert Raikes is generally credited with the founding of the first Sunday school at Gloucester, England, in 1780, and five years later a sprout of this religious innovation was brought to this country, where it took root and has flourished beyond anything it ever knew in the land from which it came. Sunday Schools in America were few in number until a phenomenal growth occurred in the eighteen twenties. The American Sunday School Union came into being in 1824 and inaugurated a very aggressive movement for the organization of Sunday Schools and the publication of Sunday School literature. From May, 1830 to May, 1832, this Union had sent seventy-eight Sunday School missionaries into the Mississippi Valley where they organized nearly three thousand Sunday Schools and revived nearly one thousand others which had become dormant.

Unusually alert to the trend of the times, the young pastor of the Evangelical congregation in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, Jacob Schnerr, organized the first Sunday School of the denomination in his church in 1832, the very year that the first national Sunday School Convention was held in New York City. Fourteen of the twenty-four states and four territories of the Union were represented at that convention despite the fact that there were only two hundred miles of railroads in the whole country. The Evangelical Association at the time had less than four thousand members scattered mostly through Pennsylvania with

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<sup>25</sup> *SF*, p. 6.

some in Ohio, New York, Maryland and Virginia. But being so closely related to the Methodist Church, Evangelicals could not be oblivious to the remarkable results which the Sunday Schools were having in the number of conversions among the Methodists, or to the methods which the Methodists were using to encourage the Sunday Schools.

The Methodist Sunday School Union was organized in 1827 and the following year took other aggressive steps when they gathered their first statistical report, adopted a resolution obligating ministers to establish Sunday Schools, instituted teachers' meetings and raised a large fund for publishing Sunday School books. The Methodist General Conference of 1832 ordered the publication of a book on the best system of Sunday School teaching and instructed their presiding elders to promote the work of the Sunday Schools.<sup>26</sup> Three years later the Friends' Bible Society was organized and about the same time the Lutheran Church initiated its Sunday School Union.<sup>27</sup> In 1832 the Baptist Church and the Congregational Churches withdrew from the Massachusetts Sunday School Union and each formed a Society of its own.

Within three years of the founding, at Lebanon, of this first Sunday School in the Evangelical Association, the general conference in session at Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania, on May 25, 1835, resolved that wherever practicable, German Sabbath Schools were to be conducted in our societies. Just about that time the Sunday Schools in Philadelphia and New Berlin were established. Being very responsive to the newly adopted rule of the general conference, the Rev. Henry Bucks founded a number of Sunday Schools in Ohio and shortly after the session of the New York Conference, the Rev. Joseph Harlacher organized three Sunday Schools on the Buffalo Circuit. A Sunday School seems to have been founded on the Upper Milford Circuit about 1835 and in Berlin, now Kitchener, Canada, in 1837. The first Sunday School in the far West was organized by the Des Plaines Society in Illinois in 1838 and on October 4th of that year a Sunday School was begun in Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania.<sup>28</sup>

Among the leaders of the early church, who were particularly active in the work of establishing Evangelical Sunday Schools and who were largely responsible for its first success, the names of the following must be mentioned: the Revs. Jacob Schnerr, and John P. Leib, co-founders at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, in 1832, of the first Sunday School in the Evangelical Association, Charles Hammer, W. W. Orwig, J. G. Zinser,

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<sup>26</sup> Wardle, Addie Grace, *History of the S. S. Movement in the M. E. Church*, pp. 61-74.

<sup>27</sup> Brown, S. S., *The S. S. Movement in America*, pp. 114, 118, 124.

<sup>28</sup> For details on the establishment of early Evangelical Sunday Schools consult Albright, R. W., and Leedy, R. B.—*A Story of Religious Education in the Evangelical Church*, Cleveland, 1932. Chapter II.



Aaron Yambert, Henry Stoeber, Henry Bucks and Joseph Harlacher; and indeed many others should be added. Because of his unusual contribution to the Sunday School movement in the Evangelical Association, and because he was responsible for the founding of three Sunday Schools in the earliest days, Jacob Schnerr deserves a brief sketch of his life here.

Schnerr was born in Adams County, Pennsylvania, May 17, 1806. Of his background nothing is known for he first appears as a friendless youth whom John Schlosser received into his home in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. Here, as one of the family, he listened to the Evangelical ministers as they preached on their regular trips through this region in 1828; in his twenty-second year, Schnerr was converted and united with the church and soon was made the exhorter of his class. His skill led others to realize quite early that he possessed qualifications for preaching, and he, too, felt called to the ministry, but he had no means to make possible his travelling as a preacher. His *Journal* contains this interesting entry:

"In the month of May, precisely one year after my conversion, Brother Abraham Buchmann sent word to me, to come to his house, because a local preacher was holding a meeting there. I had to go thirteen miles and came there on Saturday evening and stayed till Sunday afternoon. When I made ready for my return home, Brother Buchmann said I should yet tarry a little as he wanted first to go to his barn, from where he presently returned with a young horse. I thought he intended to accompany me part of the way, but then he led the fine, spirited animal to me, and said, 'Here, Brother Schnerr, you have a horse, saddle and bridle—God wants you to preach the Gospel, and I know you haven't got the means—here they are—and don't you feel the call?' I could not answer, but my eyes were filled with tears. Here this man of God stood and told me wonderful things, each word penetrated my soul, and my strength failed me. Finally, I was helped on the waiting horse, I wept, and the aged servant of the Lord wept and—praised God. Amidst the heartiest good wishes I left the place. But what a burden did I now feel! Is it possible, I said to myself—that I shall preach the word of God? But it had to be so—the call was too definite, so that I could not resist." <sup>29</sup>

At the following conference in June 1829, Schnerr was received into the itinerancy and stationed on York Circuit. While pastor of the Lebanon Circuit, he and his co-laborer, Leib, organized the first Sunday School in the church at Lebanon in 1832 and in 1833 he visited Philadelphia in the interest of extending the work of the church and finding new preaching places. He was well received in the home of Mrs. M. Roemer, where on November 29th, he preached to about a dozen

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<sup>29</sup> Quoted in *YH*(1), p. 402.

persons. The following evening about thirty persons attended a service he held in the home of David Gutbrod. After that Schnerr made regular visits to Philadelphia, where he preached in a schoolhouse on Fourth Street near Poplar, and organized a class of thirty persons. In 1834 he was stationed on York Circuit and the following year when the first self-sustaining field was established in Philadelphia, Jacob Schnerr was appointed its pastor. Before his brief pastorate of two years (the limit in those days) had expired, he had established in Philadelphia, the second Sunday School of the denomination. His last appointment was on the Womelsdorf Circuit, in 1838, during which year he spent much time in Orwigsburg and was instrumental, even though failing in health, in founding the Sunday School in that place on October 4, 1838. Because of pulmonary trouble, Schnerr was compelled to retire from the itinerancy in 1839 and went to live with his father-in-law in Orwigsburg. For some time he acted as the superintendent of the Sunday School at Orwigsburg while he served as an agent for the American Tract Society. Schnerr died on March 10, 1849, while yet in his early forties, having exerted in his brief ministry one of the earliest and greatest influences in the Evangelical Association, in behalf of the Sunday School movement.

Although there were many difficulties which interfered with the establishing of Sunday Schools, the church did everything within its power to provide through the printing plant German and English Sunday School books and by strongly spoken and printed appeals endeavored to overcome all opposition. The editorials and other articles appearing in *Der Christliche Botschafter* were particularly productive of good will, and helpful in giving detailed methods for opening and operating these schools. The second edition of this journal carried the first article on this point:

"We are pleased to learn, that in compliance with the injunctions of the General Conference, measures are taken nearly throughout the Evangelical Association to introduce Sabbath Schools. . . . Our preachers on their respective circuits, have exerted themselves, and succeeded without meeting with great opposition, in making a promising beginning in this good cause. It is true, the cause does not yet command the general attention, to which in our opinion, it is so eminently entitled; but it is progressing, and we hope to see ere long, at least one Sabbath School established in each class of every circuit, throughout the entire Association."<sup>30</sup>

The editorials and articles appearing at intervals during the next twenty years tell the story of leaders giving enthusiastic support to the Sunday School movement in the church, of objection on the part of unlearned laymen, of criticism by pastors who felt that the preachers were

<sup>30</sup> CB, Vol. I, 1836, p. 12.

not doing all within their power to make the rule of general conference universally applicable, and of efficient organizers who wrote well about the best methods of establishing and conducting schools. One very strong plea for Sunday Schools came from editor W. W. Orwig:

"An objection might be raised that religious instruction can be given by the parents in the home. This is true and would to God it would be done. But most parents have no desire to obtain the knowledge necessary in the practise of their own moral duties, much less to direct their children in the same. Even among parents who have been awakened by the Gospel, there is little conversation with children about religion and godly things. To be sure they are busy in obtaining a knowledge of earthly and temporal things, but that which is of greatest value is neglected by most people. Even should parents fulfil their duties in this respect, yet a well organized Sunday School would be of great assistance toward the goal of instructing their children. . . . Parents can give their children nothing better than a good education and good religious instruction. . . . How much better would it be if parents would think of giving their children a good education rather than accumulating earthly goods for them which in many instances are hindrances to their salvation and keep them out of the Kingdom."<sup>31</sup>

Another appeal from the Rev. Henry Bucks was for more Sunday Schools:

"Would it not be advisable in such places where the preaching does not seem to be very fruitful, to organize a Sunday School and devote part of the Sabbath to the youth, instead of preaching two or three times to old hardened sinners on whom all the efforts seem to be lost? Experience evidently shows that young people are more respective of good than those who are hardened in sin. If it is our desire to improve our Church in respect to culture and godliness, we must give more earnest and active attention to the instruction of our youth."<sup>32</sup>

In the light of the emphasis of the early leaders of the church on catechetical instruction and personal evangelism, the zeal of these leaders for the best methods of Christian education is to be expected. By 1840 it could be said that the Sunday Schools were still becoming more and more popular and also "that glorious results began to show themselves at this time in the awakening and conversion of many of the scholars of our Sabbath Schools."

Over the signatures of George Brickley, Charles Hammer and W. W. Orwig, a committee appointed by the West Pennsylvania Conference, a pastoral letter was sent to all the members of that conference including appeals for coöperative support in their new organization as a conference just established by the preceding General Conference of

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<sup>31</sup> *CB*, 1838, p. 76.

<sup>32</sup> *CB*, 1840, p. 187.



1839. Among many other statements of great interest this committee wrote:

"The cause of Sabbath Schools has especial claims on our attention; . . . they are a great blessing to the young and powerful helps to keep the Sabbath holy, to train the rising generation, to inculcate and develop sound principles of morality, and thus to further the cause of true religion. Sabbath Schools may justly be regarded as the nurseries of the Church, where thousands of youthful minds receive the first impressions of the fear of God and religion, which generally strike deep roots and are not easily erased."<sup>33</sup>

The General Conference of 1847 once again urged every preacher in charge to make diligent effort to establish Sunday Schools wherever practicable. Shortly afterward, at its sessions in 1849, the West Pennsylvania Conference urged the general conference to form a Sunday School Union. The first statistical report of the Sunday School movement was brought to the East Pennsylvania Conference in session in Allentown, February 23, 1848, revealing that in this area of the church there were nineteen schools having 1,113 pupils and 211 teachers. The ratio of one teacher to every five pupils is an indication of the interest intelligent laymen were showing in this dynamic new movement.

## 51. THE CHARITABLE SOCIETY AND THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Two very important societies of the denomination were organized during this period from 1830 to 1850, the Charitable Society in 1835 and the General Missionary Society in 1839.

### a. The Charitable Society

The Charitable Society of the Evangelical Association and the Superannuation Fund, in spirit and purpose at least, may be traced to the 1832 session of the Eastern Conference held in June at New Berlin, Pennsylvania, when that conference resolved "that a fund be established for the support of the superannuated preachers, and the widows and orphans of deceased preachers." John Rank was chosen the first trustee of this fund. By the time of the next general conference in 1835, the value of this fund had apparently become so well known that this body decided to incorporate the organization under the name of the "Charitable Society of the Evangelical Association," to be located in Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania, the seat of the 1835 conference. The first directors were the following nine persons, John Seybert, J. P. Leib, Jacob Hammer, Joseph Hammer, Eli Hammer, S. Rickert, John Rickert, W. Wildermuth, and Andrew Schwalm. A committee composed of

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<sup>33</sup> Quoted in *OH*, p. 294.

Joseph Long, W. W. Orwig and J. C. Reisner was appointed to formulate a plan of organization, which upon presentation was adopted as the Constitution of the Charitable Society.

This constitution provided (first), that a member must be at least twenty-one years of age, a member of the denomination for at least a year, and a citizen of Pennsylvania in which the body was incorporated, (second) that in case of a vacancy occurring through death, resignation, or expulsion from the church, the society shall nominate twice the number of those whose seats have become vacant from which the next general conference shall elect the required number of members, and (third) the society was to have charge of all charitable funds and bequests, loan the money at lawful interest and annually pay the income to the Eastern Conference. Article 7 stated the purpose of the Society to be "relieving the distresses, and supplying the deficiencies of itinerant and superannuated ministers of the Evangelical Association in the United States of America, who remain in connection with and continue subject to, the order and control of the general conference, as also for the relief of the wives and children, widows and orphans, of such ministers, and for no other use, intent, or purpose whatever." The constitution also clearly stated the maximum sum which any beneficiary of the fund might be allowed annually: an itinerant superannuated single minister \$50, if married \$100, widows of such ministers, \$50, and children or orphans of such ministers, \$12 each.

It is very clear that these funds were not designed to be the sole support of needy superannuated ministers or their families. It was assumed that if possible all such persons should work to support themselves, but if this was impossible, the funds of the Charitable Society were to be used to make a reasonable living possible. Herein the Charitable Society differed widely from the present Superannuation Fund which provides a fixed income for all superannuated ministers and their families on a purely business-like basis, the income depending on the years of service given to the church and the regular payment of annual premiums.

It was natural to expect that some opposition to the Society and its plan of operation would arise. Some objected to the fact that the church was hereby made responsible for the support of men and their families who had served the church but very little and that, perhaps, not very well. Very few of such cases however, were ever cited. There were others who felt that the preachers should be paid a better salary annually while in the active service of the church and then upon their retirement allow them to care for themselves.

Numerous bequests even in the first years were made to the Charitable Society. The largest single bequest came from the estate of Frederick Miller, a brother of the Rev. George Miller, a resident of the upper

part of Lehigh County who, having died in 1854 without any children, had willed his entire estate to the Society. The estate was variously estimated at from \$12,000 to \$14,000, but through litigation, which was carried even to the State Supreme Court, was considerably reduced so that the net receipts from this gift were \$8,124.29. The very first bequest had been made before the organization of this fund by Maria Kuster, who willed her entire estate for the benefit of superannuated preachers in Pennsylvania. The Eastern Conference, however, voted to relinquish their exclusive claim to this sum of \$2,600 and accordingly placed it in the common treasury of the Charitable Fund. Another gift of the earlier years included \$3,150 from Mrs. Kugler. When the Society was first organized, Bishop Seybert paid into the treasury the sum of \$4,312.03 which he said had been entrusted to him for such purposes by friends, most of whom lived in Pennsylvania. The bishop also left a bequest of \$1,400 to the Society at the time of his death.

By the year 1867 the sum of \$9,141.43 had been paid in equal shares to the various conferences whether they had claimants or not, but in that year the former rule, adopted in 1843, was changed to provide assistance to conferences on the basis of need, which policy was continued until the Society was in effect merged with the Superannuation Fund in 1930. The aggregate sum disbursed among the conference claimants from 1836, the time of its first meeting, to 1930, exceeds \$1,000,000. At the time of the General Conference of 1930, the treasurer of the Charitable Society turned over to the treasury of the Superannuation Fund assets valued at approximately \$30,600. The charter of the Society has not and very likely will not be vacated for many years, because of probable bequests which may be made to the Society.<sup>34</sup>

### b. The Missionary Society

While the Evangelical Association was distinctly a missionary church from the very beginning, the doing of missionary work in the earliest days was more or less dependent upon the free time of the circuit riders, who endeavored first of all to cover their regularly appointed circuits, and to respond to invitations of laymen who might ask the preachers to visit their vicinity and conduct services. Yet as early as 1813, John Dreisbach and Adam Hennig were sent out by the sixth annual conference "to organize a new circuit" and D. Yerlitz and John Kleinfelter "to organize another new circuit." After John Seybert had served eight years as a presiding elder he was granted permission, in 1833, to serve as a missionary for a year. He was assigned to what was

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<sup>34</sup> Many of the facts regarding the early history of the Charitable Society from 1836 to 1875 were preserved in the summary prepared by the Rev. Solomon Neitz, the secretary and treasurer in 1876. Excerpts from these early records were read to the General Conference of 1930 by the Rev. T. L. Wentz and subsequently printed in the *Evangelical-Messenger* of November 22, 1930.



called the Erie Circuit but which in reality was only the prospect of a circuit and required the application of missionary zeal and methods, if ever an appointment in the church did. Describing the missionary spirit of the preachers in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, Reuben Yeakel tells that it seemed to be the universal desire of the preachers to extend and enlarge the boundaries of the church. It was still the custom then on many of the circuits to have a senior and junior preacher, who largely worked independently of each other. At intervals through the year they met to lay their further plans. Yeakel describes the meeting of these early preachers in his father's house in Upper Milford, Pennsylvania, when there was great rejoicing if either or both had established new preaching places.<sup>35</sup>

It was this deeply rooted missionary spirit, characteristic not only of pietists in this country but in Europe as well, which led to the formation of the first missionary societies of the Evangelical Association.

W. W. Orwig, who is generally credited with fathering the first Societies, traces his first interest in missions to a number of issues of the *Basler Missions Magazine* which the Rev. John Seybert had purchased from a person in Blooming Grove, Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, and subsequently presented to the Publishing House for the use of the editor. This European magazine, together with the promising reports being sent in from the Evangelical preachers in the field, led Orwig, then the editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*, to perpare an article entitled "Men Ought to Extol and Magnify the Work of God." The creativeness and resourcefulness of the mind and heart of William Orwig are clearly seen when it is remembered that before he sponsored the missionary society in 1838 he had similarly been largely responsible for the reëstablishing of the printing plant and the German periodical as well. Even in 1838, he was but twenty-eight years of age.

At the twelfth session of the Eastern Conference held in Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania, March 28 to April 4, W. W. Orwig made the motion which was promptly passed and brought into existence the first missionary society of the denomination. Upon presentation by a committee appointed for the purpose, the conference adopted the following constitution:

### Constitution

Article 1. The Society shall be called: The German Evangelical Missionary Society of North America.

Article 2. The object of this Society shall be to make arrangements and provide means, to extend and promote the kingdom of God, by missionaries.

Article 3. Every member shall annually contribute an optional sum, for the support of the society.

<sup>35</sup> YH(1), p. 253, note.

Article 4. For the transactions of the business of this society, a president and a vice-president, a secretary and an assistant secretary, and a treasurer, shall be annually elected.

Article 5. In addition to these officers, four members of the society shall be selected, who, with the officers, shall constitute a committee, to transact the necessary business during the interval of the annual meetings. The majority of this committee shall form a quorum, to transact business.

Article 6. All superintending preachers of the Evangelical Association shall be authorized agents to establish auxiliary societies and to receive moneys in order to hand them over to the treasurer.

Article 7. All demands on the treasurer must be accompanied with an order signed by the president and secretary.

Article 8. The members of this society are to meet annually in the place where the Annual Conference session takes place, in the evening before the opening of Conference.

Article 9. The society shall be authorized, by a majority of votes, to alter or to amend this constitution from time to time.

The following officers were elected for the first year, by a majority of votes of the society: W. W. Orwig, president; J. P. Leib, vice-president; Jacob Vogelbach, secretary; Charles Hammer, assistant secretary; and Thomas Buck, treasurer. The select committee members were Philip Wagner, Francis Hoffman, Jacob Schnerr and Joseph M. Saylor.<sup>36</sup>

A voluntary offering for missions was received amounting to \$26.50. Auxiliary societies were formed throughout the conference and during that first year \$500 was contributed for missions although no missions were established until the following year. At about the same time this memorable conference was in session, Editor Orwig printed another article on "The Christian and the Heathen" in which, after stating briefly the deplorable moral condition of the whole human family, he called attention to the duty of Christians to preach the gospel to every creature.

Notwithstanding the usefulness of this society it was felt that its scope should include the entire denomination and so during the Christmas season of 1838, a number of ministers and laymen met at the home of W. W. Orwig to discuss the possibility of forming a missionary society for the denomination. The Revs. John Seybert, George Brickley, and W. W. Orwig were appointed a committee to draft a constitution for presentation at a subsequent meeting which was set for March 1, 1839, at the home of John S. Dunkel in Buffalo Valley, four miles from New Berlin. On this date and at this place the General Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association was formed and the constitution, prepared by this committee, was adopted. The first officers chosen for the society were John Seybert, president; James Barber,

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<sup>36</sup> Quoted in *OH*, p. 225f.

Daniel Berger and George Brickley, first, second and third vice-presidents, respectively; S. G. Miller, secretary; W. W. Orwig, recording and corresponding secretary; and John S. Dunkel, treasurer. The managers of the society were Charles Hammer, Henry Thomas, Philip Schmidt, John Kaufman, Dr. I. Brugger, Martin Dreisbach, Martin D. Reed, John Rohland, Philip Wagner, Michael F. Maize, Isaac Eyer, John Maize, Leonard Gebhart, and Sebastian Mosser. Soon after this organizational meeting the general conference met on March 25, 1839, approved the constitution and confirmed the establishment of this the General Missionary Society of the denomination.

The board of the society held its first meeting Monday, January 17, 1839, at New Berlin, Pennsylvania, in order to adopt by-laws and rules for the regulation of its business. Among other things it was decided that a notice of the founding of this society was to be published in *Der Christliche Botschafter* together with a Circular, and a message of the board, drawn up by a committee.

The first annual meeting of the General Missionary Society was held at New Berlin, April 21, 1840, at which time it was decided to have five hundred copies of the Constitution printed for distribution, and a committee, consisting of Charles Hammer, George Brickley and S. G. Miller, was appointed to have the society incorporated. W. W. Orwig read the first annual report indicating a prosperous condition of the society and that the missionaries, receiving support from the society, reported successful years on their fields of labor. Including the \$500 collected the year previous by the first missionary society, the total receipts reported for the year were \$1,434.31. The newly chosen officers included the Rev. Charles Hammer, president; vice-presidents, the Revs. James Barber, George Brickley, and Philip Wagner; S. G. Miller, secretary; W. W. Orwig, corresponding secretary; and J. S. Dunkel, treasurer.

Branch societies of the General Missionary Society were soon organized in every annual conference, and in many localities auxiliary societies were formed by interested members on the missions and circuits. By 1840 at least thirty auxiliary bodies were established and many other communities were simply waiting the opportune time to organize. The old Eastern Conference Society was discontinued and its funds equally divided between the newly formed auxiliary societies of the East Pennsylvania and the West Pennsylvania Conferences.

The first Woman's Missionary Society was formed November 11, 1839, in Philadelphia where the Rev. Jacob Vogelbach, who had been the secretary of the very first missionary society, was the pastor at the time. He took the sixth article of that constitution literally and formed an auxiliary society in his congregation. The officers of that first women's society were president, Mrs. Catherine Grafenstein; vice-presidents,



A. Maria Walker and Catherine Kiser; secretary, Caroline Vogelbach; and treasurer, Margaret Kraker. Catherine Bixenstein and Margaret Arnsworth were a special committee to work with the officers.<sup>37</sup>

Unfortunately, this society was discontinued during the difficulty in the Philadelphia church which finally resulted in the withdrawal of the Rev. Jacob Vogelbach from the denomination. Numerous other women's auxiliaries of this sort were organized in many parts of the church but it was to be another generation before the present Woman's Missionary Society was inaugurated.

In 1859 the general conference elected the corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society, and since that time he has been a general officer of the entire denomination.

That the new enthusiasm for missionary work gripped the entire church during the years following 1839 is shown by the minutes of the conferences. The Western Conference extended its operations by dividing its larger circuits so as to create six new ones and the Eastern Conference founded four new missions, sending Jacob Borket into the city of New York, Christian Hummel to Mohawk mission in New York State and Christian Holl and Michael Eis as missionaries to Canada on the Waterloo and Black Creek missions respectively. One hundred and twenty-five conversions occurred on these mission fields during the first year. The reports coming from these missions as early as June, 1839, were promptly printed in *Der Christliche Botschafter* and had much to do with increasing the interest of the Christian laity in the missionary cause. The leaders of the church soon saw how indispensable their regularly printed periodical was becoming in the widening of the influence of the church.

By 1841 the corresponding secretary of the society was able to write that all the annual conferences had organized branch missionary societies and "we may reasonably hope that all our members will be enlisted in this holy cause, provided the itinerants do their duty." It is amazing that in two years time these leaders could hope that every member in the denomination could be enlisted in some auxiliary society somewhere. However, as late as 1845 the East Pennsylvania Conference still found it necessary to instruct the preachers "to organize missionary auxiliaries at each appointment." It is barely possible that a few ministers and certainly some of the laity objected to the missionary organizations. W. W. Orwig, who lived at the heart of the movement, is qualified to write about this opposition perhaps better than any other:

"The preachers generally took a deep interest in the matter. . . . It was a new thing among us, and there were still people in our midst, who considered it safe to cling to the old measures, and who, therefore,

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<sup>37</sup> *The Abiding Past*, Harrisburg, Pa., 1936, p. 11.

opposed all new ones about to be introduced, especially such as came into contact with their purses. Others again, who were not so very apprehensive in this respect, yet were not able to see the necessity of such a laborious and expensive enterprise; least of all, the propriety of making arrangements to send missionaries among the heathen. They were of the opinion, that since the old brethren, or the first preachers and members of the Association, had not recommended this cause, and as God had owned and blessed the Association, being without such measures and institutions, the introduction of each and every one of these measures was but a step toward 'Babel,' as some used to express themselves."<sup>38</sup>

These conservative leaders evidently followed the old Zwinglian line of reason that that is forbidden which is not specifically ordered or enjoined. With not the slightest dishonor but, on the contrary, with the greatest respect for the work of their forefathers, the more aggressive leaders in this great cause, however, believed that it was necessary to build upon the solid foundation which had been laid in the past, and felt an even added duty to make the proper use of the greater wealth, culture and training, and newer measures current in their day to advance the work of the kingdom. Because they involved less expense, missions were more readily opened in the West and this form of work prospered most satisfactorily there. In the larger cities of the East, on the other hand, slower progress was made. Toward the end of the first decade, after the stimulating effect of the newness of the movement had somewhat decreased, the zeal for missionary work in a number of places cooled rather quickly, and by 1845 a number of the auxiliary societies had already been dissolved. Yet despite this discouraging fact, new missions and circuits were established at almost every conference session and even a layman, H. W. Peterson, took the initiative to write an open letter for publication in *Der Christliche Botschafter*, which the editor called "A Canadian Cry," and which was entitled "Present State of Christianity among the Germans of Upper Canada." After describing the situation in Canada, Mr. Peterson continued:

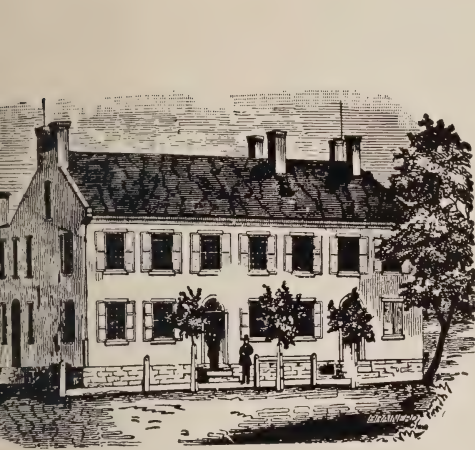
"Compared with us, the United States are far better supplied with ministers of every denomination. . . . Even the Evangelical Association, whose ministers seem not to labor either for money or fame, has forsaken or at least forgotten or neglected us. . . . I greatly mistake the principles of your Church or rather of your brethren in the ministry, if their main object is money or fame; for the three or four preachers, whom your Association formerly sent us, out of Christian love, manifested both humility and self-denial; and I believe, that their labors were not in vain. Brother Jacob Riegel, especially, was well received by all among whom he labored. By dint of indefatigable labor, self-

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<sup>38</sup> OH, p. 240.



PUBLISHING HOUSES OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH



NEW BERLIN, PA.—1837



CLEVELAND, OHIO—1854

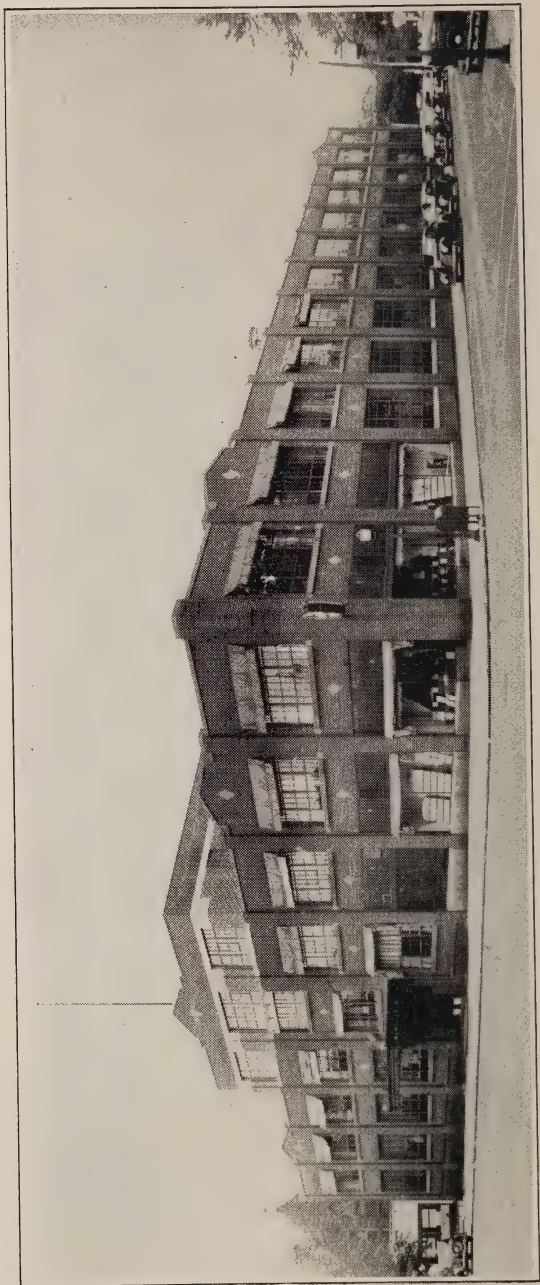


CLEVELAND, OHIO—1874





CLEVELAND, OHIO—1934



HARRISBURG, PA.—1942

denial, persevering, enlightened zeal for the glory of God and the welfare of immortal souls, he, or one like him, might accomplish a vast amount of good among us. . . . Under the wise guidance of a truly Christian pastor, who would adorn his doctrine by a pious life, there could, with the help of God, soon a considerable society be gathered in our midst." (Signed) Poor Sinner.<sup>39</sup>

It is needless to say that this strong appeal had much to do in determining to send two missionaries into upper Canada the next year. The success of the General Missionary Society and the conference branches as well is in no small way due to laymen such as Mr. Peterson, who saw the need for the universal application of the gospel, and to ministers who were never satisfied with the work on their appointments unless they had formed new preaching places and interested their members in the world mission of Christianity.

## 52. THE REESTABLISHED PUBLISHING HOUSE AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

The fourth and fifth decades of the nineteenth century mark the most important developments in printing and publishing in the entire history of the denomination. Sensing the great need for a medium through which to disseminate information and promote their denominational programs, the leaders of the Evangelical Association launched *Der Christliche Botschafter* in 1835 and the following year reestablished their own printing plant at New Berlin. This period also marks the beginning of the publication of *The Evangelical Messenger* in 1848 and the printing of more books at the expense and risk of the denomination than in any comparable period. Despite the fact that the actual legislation which moved the publishing interests to Cleveland, Ohio, was transacted by the General Conference of 1851, which reaches just one year beyond the period under consideration in this chapter, this removal and the development of the publishing house will be discussed here in order to make possible a connected story.

After the closing of the first publishing house in 1821, the printing for the denomination was done almost exclusively by George Miller who operated a private business in New Berlin, Pennsylvania. Since this was comparatively expensive, much less printing was done than during the preceding five years when the church had its own press. However, the church ordered *Der Christliche Botschafter* and actually printed the first volume during 1836 in George Miller's printing house before it had reestablished its own printing plant. Several books were also printed during the interval between 1821 and 1837, which appear to have been ordered by the church, as for example, the first German

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<sup>39</sup> Quoted in *OH*, p. 229.



edition of John Firth's *Life of Benjamin Abbott*, translated by H. W. Billee which was printed in New Berlin in 1835.

Although there were some who felt that the failure of the first publishing establishment might be repeated if another such venture were made, the General Conference of 1836 nevertheless decided to open a new Publishing House, and with the beginning of the next year the second volume of *Der Christliche Botschafter* appeared from its own press, and once more the Evangelical Association was ready for a wider printing program.

#### a. *Der Christliche Botschafter*

For a number of years there were those in the Evangelical Association who were convinced that the denomination should publish a periodical of its own, but this view was by no means held universally. The German churches, in those days, were not publishing such papers, and it was therefore those who were prepared to read the English papers, who were the first to see the advantages of such an organ. The first religious newspaper to make its appearance in this country was the *Herald of Gospel Liberty* published by the Christian Church, and issued for the first time in 1808. It included the striking statement, "A religious newspaper is a thing almost unknown under the sun. I know not but that this is the first ever published in the world."

*The Religious Telescope*, the first regular periodical published by the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, made its first appearance in December, 1834. It was a paper of four folio pages, fifteen by twenty-two inches, and was issued semi-monthly at a cost of \$1.50 per year if paid in advance or \$2 per year if paid at the end of the year. Their publishing house had been created by their General Conference of 1833, although religious journals had previously been published among them in various sections of their church. Under the auspices of the Miami Annual Conference, Aaron Farmer published *Zion's Advocate* at Salem, Indiana, in 1829, but through lack of support it was discontinued after two years. A second unsuccessful venture was the publication of *The Mountain Messenger*, begun under the title *The Union Messenger* on June 27, 1834 by William R. Rhinehart under the approval of the Virginia Conference. Only a few issues of this paper appeared and both the editor and the equipment were later absorbed in the publication of *The Religious Telescope*.<sup>40</sup>

Most of the membership and many of the ministers of the Evangelical Association did not know of these regular English church papers or the value they brought their readers and sponsoring organizations. Consequently there were many conservative laymen and clergy who opposed the starting of a church paper on the grounds that

<sup>40</sup> Drury, A. W., *op. cit.*, p. 347f.



it was a novelty or another dangerous innovation like the Sunday Schools or the temperance cause. Some even reasoned that it would make the denomination proud or worldly-minded and that it might lead to the over-emphasis of literary attainments.

Its enthusiastic sponsors were finally able to obtain the authorization to begin publication when they had secured seven hundred subscribers. With some difficulty these first seven hundred subscriptions were secured and the first issue of *Der Christliche Botschafter* appeared in New Berlin in January, 1836. Within a year the subscription list had mounted to eleven hundred and the paper was so well received and approved that by the end of the second year its circulation had risen to fifteen hundred copies. This meant that in two years more than twenty per cent of the membership of the church had subscribed to the official church paper. And when one remembers that the average family in those days was considerably larger than at present, it is apparent that most of the families of the church were subscribers to the new journal.

During the first year the paper was edited by the Rev. Adam Ettinger, a man of cyclopedic knowledge, and was printed by George Miller, who had been selected by the Eastern Conference to assume the responsibilities. At first it was a monthly paper eight and one-half inches by ten and one-half inches, which sold for 75c if paid in advance or \$1 if paid at the end of the year. The special General Conference of 1836 elected W. W. Orwig as the editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*, which position has ever since been a general office in the church. Orwig assumed his office in April, 1837, which then had the added responsibility of supervising the publishing plant, and he filled both offices until 1839 when Charles Hammer was elected as the first general agent of the publishing house. Orwig rendered these services for his church for \$150 a year, which salary was increased to \$175 in 1839 and again to \$190 in 1841. At first there were comparatively few who would write articles for the new paper and those who wrote usually refrained from signing their names, perhaps because they were afraid of offending their more conservative friends or appearing to be proud in having their names in print. Matters soon changed and, with increasing interest, reports from all parts of the church began to appear in these columns. The General Conference of 1839 ordered that the paper should be enlarged and printed semi-monthly and increased the subscription price to \$1 if paid in advance. This German paper has been published continuously since 1836 and is the oldest periodical of its kind in this country.

Orwig continued as editor until 1843 when Adam Ettinger succeeded him and four years later Nicholas Gehr was chosen to edit both *Der Christliche Botschafter* and the newly established *Evangelical Messenger*.

The size of both these papers was changed from time to time, increasing at times to very large folio but more recently to a more convenient magazine size. Both periodicals appeared as weeklies for the first time in 1861 and by 1867 had been very much enlarged and their subscription rates increased to \$2 annually. Apparently due to many sad experiences, the General Conference of 1855 insisted that all subscriptions should be paid in advance. This conference also ordered the publication of a German paper for children which appeared under the editorship of Charles G. Koch and was called *Der Christliche Kinderfreund*.

While *Der Christliche Botschafter* in 1836 was distributed among only 700 subscribers in its first year of issue, that list had more than doubled two years later and by 1845 reached a total of 3,000. Apparently the readers of this first journal of the denomination were highly delighted for the list of subscribers continued to mount rapidly: 5,500 in 1854, 11,114 in 1862, and by 1875, 20,282 names appeared on this list. The high point in circulation of *Der Christliche Botschafter* was reached in the late years of the last century when the list mounted to almost 25,000 names. During the recent decades the number of German readers has steadily declined and subscriptions have also been divided between this paper and other publications of the denomination so that at present less than 5,000 copies of this, the oldest German religious periodical in America, are issued each week.

#### b. *The Evangelical Messenger*

With the wider sanctioning of the use of the English language in the Evangelical Association came a consciousness of the need of an English church paper. As early as 1843 the general conference resolved "that an English paper be published as soon as practicable," which according to the letter meant that no English paper could be issued until eight hundred subscriptions had been secured. But sentiment was slow in developing in its favor and apparently its supporters were not as ardent as those of the German paper had been a decade before, for not until January 8, 1848, did the first issue appear. It was a large sheet of four pages, with sixteen columns of printed matter, and appeared every two weeks, selling for \$1 a year if paid for in advance. Nicholas Gehr edited this paper until his withdrawal from the denomination in 1849, at which time he was succeeded as editor by Henry Fischer. From the very beginning the editors of *The Evangelical Messenger* have been general church officers and among the most able men of the denomination.

Even the German leaders of the church studied the English language and came to support *The Evangelical Messenger* by reading every issue of it and by recommending it to others, and by sending in reports of

the work on their circuits. In the fourth and fifth numbers of this paper, one who signed himself "Onesimus" wrote:

"*The Messenger* has paid us its first visit, and has in our region received a cordial welcome. From the character of its name we had reason to expect a plain-dealing, Gospel teacher, and we have not as yet been disappointed. We look for intelligence, the most useful, important and interesting, at each successive visitation. It is our best friend, as it tells us of our faults, teaches us how to reform and points out to us the advantage of such a course. . . . *The Messenger* will undoubtedly be the unflinching advocate of true Evangelical preaching—Christ and him crucified, repentance toward God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and deep, practical piety. . . . We expect the *Messenger* will at proper times and in proper places oppose the corruptions of the age in which we live. . . . We trust that no organization, deleterious to the true interests of the Gospel, will receive any sanction from this periodical; but that the unfruitful works of darkness will be reproved, and the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ allowed to shine in every corner of the land, and to every department of the society, as a guide to the young, an instructor of the ignorant, and a help to the benighted and wayward traveller."<sup>41</sup>

Through all the years of its existence *The Evangelical Messenger* has served most excellently the church which created it, not so much by the theological erudition manifested in its articles, as by offering a medium for the exchange of ideas, the dissemination of interesting and important news and the promotion of the programs and institutions of the denomination. As the use of the German language steadily declined after the Civil War, the subscriptions to the German periodicals have gradually decreased in number, while those to the English periodicals have steadily increased. The circulation of *The Evangelical Messenger* reached a high peak in 1926 when after the merging of the churches almost 25,000 copies were issued every week. While only 800 persons subscribed to this English paper during its very first year, that number had increased to 2,354 by 1854 and reached 6,625 by 1863. This list was almost doubled by 1889 when 12,000 persons received *The Evangelical Messenger*. In 1941 there were approximately 17,500 subscribers.

### c. Various Books Published

The leaders of the Evangelical Association recognized that in addition to the Bible, it was necessary to provide other wholesome religious literature for the people, especially since the intervals between the visits of the circuit preacher were rather long. An excellent example of such literature is to be found in the devotional book by P. Hackenberg entitled *A Short Review of the Most Important Teachings of the*

<sup>41</sup> EM, 1848, Vol. 1, Nos. 4 and 5.



*Christian Religion.* The nature of this book is clearly seen from the introduction, in which it is stated that the author,

"Out of his and others' writings, tried to lead readers into the good old way. Jesus is the way, the only way to the Father; the living way to holiness, bliss and to heaven."<sup>42</sup>

This volume was completed by Hackenberg in Freyburg, March, 1838, and before the end of the year the first American edition of it was printed in German at New Berlin.

During the period between 1830 and 1850, the church fathers ordered the publication of many such volumes in addition to the numerous hymn books, catechisms, disciplines and small books for use in the Sunday Schools.<sup>43</sup>

Several volumes were ordered printed by the publication committee of the church even before the denominational press was reestablished. Among these was George Miller's *Life of Albright*, to which was added Miller's *Autobiography*. This small book was printed in New Berlin in 1834. The following year the committee had John Firth's *Life of Benjamin Abbott* translated into German and printed, and in 1836 Lorenzo Dow's *Chain of Reason* appeared. The third German *Discipline* was printed in 1831, and the first one in English in 1832. A curious family medical book, *The Secret (Occult) Doctor or Useful House-friend* was published in New Berlin in 1830 and if not sponsored by the church was certainly used rather widely by its members. The second edition of the *Geistliche Saitenspiel*, the larger hymnal, appeared in 1836 and several editions of the popular smaller hymn book, the *Viole*, were printed before 1837. Even before these the Rev. Adam Ettinger had a sermon on *King Saul* printed in Harrisburg in 1828. This very literary pastor and later editor was responsible also for the article on the Evangelical Association which was the first printed history of the denomination of any proportion, and which in 1844 appeared in I. Daniel Rupp's *History of all the Religious Denominations in the United States*, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The article was revised by the Rev. W. W. Orwig for the later edition of this work which appeared in 1848. A similar article, but much less complete, was prepared for Buck's *Theological Encyclopedia* as early as 1832 and very likely was written by either Ettinger or Joseph Long. This was in reality the first attempt at a printed historical statement about the Evangelical Church.

Most of the orders, even to the specific number of copies of each title

<sup>42</sup> Hackenberg, P., *Kurze Uebersicht von dem Haupt-Lehren der Christlichen Religion*, New Berlin, 1838, p. 6.

<sup>43</sup> For a complete list of books published by Evangelical Press, see Appendix H. The story of the Evangelical Publishing House will be developed to the present in this chapter since this topic will not be discussed later in the book.

ordered, are to be found in the minutes of the Eastern Conference to which the publishing business had at first been entrusted, although a joint committee of the two conferences had been ordered by the General Conference of 1836 to pass on all manuscripts before publication. The very year that the new press was set up, the Eastern Conference placed six major orders with the house including fifteen hundred copies of a German translation of Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*; one thousand copies of a German language book, *Sprachlehre*, by Jacob Vogelbach, designed in part at least for use in Sunday Schools; one thousand copies of a revised edition of George Miller's *Practical Christianity* in the German which, however, did not appear until 1844; three or four thousand Sunday School tickets were to be issued; five hundred copies of the constitution of the Charitable Society, and the committee was instructed in addition to have various editions of the Bible printed. A stereotyped Bible and a New Testament appeared in 1841. The plates alone for this venture cost as much as the entire establishment had a few years before. The Bibles sold well and proved to be a profitable investment. In 1838 the first edition of the *A B C Buchstabier—und Lesebuch* (German Primer) by J. C. Reisner appeared. Four subsequent editions of this primer appeared in 1839, 1843 and 1848 respectively and an undated edition in Cleveland. Alphabet cards and also marriage certificates in German and English were ordered in 1845. By the year 1850 the eleventh edition of the *Viole* had already come from the press. The year 1838 also marked the appearance of an English hymn book, although the first English hymn book had been ordered by the Conference of 1833. In addition to the many catechisms, hymn books and disciplines printed during this period, two other books should be mentioned. Frederick Rambach translated David Collier's *Introduction to a True Understanding and Practical Reading of the Holy Scripture* into the German and it was printed in 1845. The other was W. Bersch's translation of J. Fletcher's *An Appeal to the Data and A Wholesome Human Understanding*, which was printed in 1839. This latter volume was a series of arguments intending to prove the depravity of human nature and was looked upon as an antidote for some Pelagian tendencies which had been slyly creeping into the views of some preachers, although the articles of faith did not teach the total depravity of human nature.

The mention of this work requires a brief mention of William Bersch, frequently unknown and entirely ignored, but one who contributed a great deal to the development of the Evangelical Church through his long connection with the printing house. Bersch, an educated young German, became a member of the church in Philadelphia. At the suggestion of his pastor, Mr. Hesser, he gave up his own business in 1838 to attach himself to the Printing House at New Berlin.

At first W. W. Orwig gave him some rooms in the publishing house and employed him, at his own expense, in shipping *Der Christliche Botschafter* and in reading proof. Finally he gave him Fletcher's *Appeal* to translate, on which he spent a great deal of time, thus making an excellent translation. Bersch became so thoroughly familiar with all the work at the plant that, especially with so many changes of officials, he became practically indispensable. At one time after the resignation of Nicholas Gehr in 1849, he was actually the one upon whom the greatest weight of editing the papers rested. Yet in the emergency all the papers appeared on time. Bersch really became part of the institution, moved to Cleveland with it, and for 44 years served the church in that connection until his death on January 12, 1882.

#### d. Publishing Houses and Publishers

When the first publishing house of the denomination was sold, the proceeds of several hundred dollars were set aside for a future plant. This sum was but a small beginning for the committee, consisting of Philip Wagner, John Ranck and W. W. Orwig, who had been instructed to buy or build a suitable building for the publishing interests. A small lot had already been purchased when the opportunity came to buy a large and substantial dwelling for \$1,900. Even though some doubted the wisdom of trading the smaller lot in this transaction, the acquiring of this larger building made it possible at once to house not only the plant but the officials of the establishment and thus save expense. The work here proved so successful that at the close of the first year a dividend of \$500 was paid to both conferences for the support of needy ministers. In each successive year dividends were paid to the conferences, except in 1842 when this publishing business suffered with all other business across the country.

With the expansion of the Evangelical Association in Canada and throughout the West, it was deemed unwise to keep the publishing center in the East and accordingly the General Conference of 1851 decided to move all the publishing interests to Cleveland, Ohio, as soon as \$9,000 could be raised for the project. The committee in charge, Joseph Long, Henry Fischer, John Dreisbach, W. W. Orwig, J. G. Zinser, and George F. Spreng purchased a lot on Woodland Avenue for \$4,360 and erected a three and a half story brick building costing \$8,000, which was approximately the amount allowed by the general conference for the purpose. The equipment was transferred from New Berlin, Pa., and the publishing begun in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1854. Apparently to facilitate the distribution of books in the East, a branch office was ordered to be opened in Reading in 1854 and a small book store was begun in Philadelphia the following year.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> BL, pp. 144 and 148.



The business prospered so rapidly that in 1874, twenty years later, it was necessary to erect a new four story building, at the corner of Vine (now East 19th) and Woodland Avenue, for which the total cost of more than \$40,000 was already in hand. Another addition costing \$18,000 was erected a few years later. But by 1884 more space was needed and the inadequate \$8,000 three and a half story building of 1854 was razed and a four story building was erected in its place at a cost of \$30,000. The new plant now covered a lot facing 123 feet on Woodland Avenue having a depth of 100 feet.

During the first few years after 1836, W. W. Orwig was both the editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and the general publishing agent in charge of the business details of the plant. It was soon discovered that the business required a full time manager and so in 1839 Charles Hammer was elected the general agent in charge of the book store and the printing of books and the regular periodicals. Hammer resigned in the spring of 1842 and was succeeded by Thomas Buck who died soon afterward. J. C. Reisner was the publisher from 1843 to 1847 when Henry Fisher was chosen to succeed him. Apparently Reisner was responsible for the publication of the first set of rules and regulations for the agents of the publishing house, which appeared in 1844 in German and was entitled, *A Circular of the Chief Book Agent to the Agents, Presiding Elders, and Annual Conferences in the Evangelical Association*. The Historical Society has a copy of this rare sixteen page booklet.

Until 1859 the business management was always directly amenable to the general conference, but in that year a Board of Publication consisting of seven members was created to serve for the quadrennium and to be elected at each general conference. That first board consisted of Bishop Joseph Long, J. G. Zinser, A. B. Schaefer, J. J. Esher, Solomon Neitz, M. Lauer and A. Niebel. In a very large way the publishers in particular and the Board of Publications as well have been responsible for the excellent success of the publishing business of the Evangelical Church which is one of the greatest assets of the denomination. Each year a good share of the profits have been divided among the annual conferences for the disabled ministers, widows and orphans of ministers and liberal support from the same source has also been given to the Superannuation Fund.

### 53. EDUCATION AND INTELLECTUAL CULTURE

In some respects the Evangelical Association was slow to foster educational and intellectual cultural advantages for its membership, old and young, lay and ministerial alike, although they were not remiss in providing spiritual culture. Particularly in the earlier years there was a deep-seated mistrust of higher learning and a seminary training for

ministers, especially because of the unfortunate experiences which these German people had had previously with men of such training, too many of whom, while intellectually learned, were ignorant in things spiritual and all too often divorced religion from daily living. Seminaries were called "preacher factories" and even so ardent a supporter of higher learning as W. W. Orwig, as late as 1847, was emphatic in his statement that he was by no means in favor of establishing a theological seminary.

With the appearance of *Der Christliche Botschafter* came the opportunity for the freer exchange of opinion in the church and soon such articles as "Education of the Clergy" and "Culture of the Mind" appeared in the first five volumes. Many ministers and laymen had come to see the advantages of a liberal education for clergy and laity alike, long before an educational institution for the church was planned. There was a hesitancy to discuss the matter however, for fear of offending ministers who had had no cultural advantages or of alienating others who were opposed to all forms of higher education. Those who did obtain an educational background for their work were at times made to feel out of place in the group. As late as 1852, the East Pennsylvania Conference gave Jesse Young permission to attend school for one year. He had been received into the itinerancy in 1851 and served as the junior preacher on Lykens Circuit. Upon his return from school he served only one more year and then by the Conference of 1853 was granted his credentials. This is another specific case, somewhat similar to the withdrawal of the Revs. Jacob Vogelbach and Nicholas Gehr in earlier years, where a well trained man was impressed that he would be able to serve the Kingdom better in a denomination which offered larger educational and cultural opportunities and granted greater freedom to laity and clergy alike. No generation has been without such losses, which in some instances very really lessened the influence and effectiveness of the church.

#### a. A History of the Denomination

It is fair to state that the free discussion of the educational work and spirit began in the church about the time of the General Conference of 1839. Prompted by a recent article on the need for a history of the Evangelical Association written by Editor W. W. Orwig, this general conference took steps in the direction of securing such a history that the ministry might become better informed about the backgrounds of their church and its work. Orwig's reasoning was very logical and effective:

"The Evangelical Association has not, indeed, attracted much attention in the world . . . yet it is by no means inferior to any other church of the country, in proportion to the time of its existence and other circumstances. . . . it ought to have a minute and correct

history of its origin, progress and all memorable and interesting events, to transmit to its descendants." <sup>45</sup>

Then Orwig went on to remind his readers that soon the aged fathers of the church would go and the very best sources for an accurate history would be gone. He further suggested that such a history should include among other matters a chronological account of the origin, progress and expansion of the church, an account of the first circuits and conferences, and a description of the establishment of its institutions.

Although it was twenty years until this first history came from the hand of Orwig, this very body appointed a minister from each conference, Charles Hammer from West Pennsylvania, Thomas Buck from East Pennsylvania and John Dreisbach from Ohio, to gather historical material and place it in Orwig's hands for editing. Only a few sheets resulted from this effort. In 1843 the Rev. John Dreisbach was appointed and in 1847 the Rev. Adam Ettinger; but neither was able to do much toward the completion of a history. The writing of this important work finally fell to W. W. Orwig who was greatly aided by the various conferences. As late as 1855 the East Pennsylvania Conference resolved,

" . . . that we will heartily coöperate with our sister conferences in aiding the compiler, that we will diligently gather correct and reliable data, and that the presiding elders shall constitute a committee to obtain from the brethren upon their districts and from other sources such information as will prove helpful and valuable." <sup>46</sup>

Orwig finally brought his history to completion in August, 1856, and it appeared in print in Cleveland in 1858. This work became one of the basic studies, among many others, which the young ministers pursued under the direction of their conferences.

#### b. Study Courses for Ministers

The first trace of official action to require organized study on the part of the young ministers appears at the General Conference of 1843 when Bishops Seybert and Long, and the Revs. Adam Ettinger, J. C. Reisner and W. W. Orwig were appointed a committee to "prepare a course of study for our junior preachers and for candidates for the ministry. It was made obligatory upon all such to give diligent study to this course." <sup>47</sup>

Apparently this rule was rather slowly carried into effect for the first committee of examiners was appointed in 1846 and consisted of W. Mintz, H. Fisher, and H. Bucks. That this matter of the study courses was taken seriously soon afterward is evident from the fact that the

<sup>45</sup> Quoted in *OH*, p. 261ff.

<sup>46</sup> *BL*, p. 147f.

<sup>47</sup> *BL*, p. 106.



Bishop was instructed by the East Pennsylvania Conference in 1851 to appoint a committee of examiners and assign to each the department of knowledge in which he shall examine the junior preachers. Bishop Long accordingly assigned the Rev. J. M. Saylor for theology and Bible reading; the Rev. J. P. Leib for church discipline; the Rev. Frederick Kreyer for grammar and rhetoric; and the Rev. Solomon Neitz for church history. This must have been a happy selection for during the next four years, at least, these men were annually reappointed to examine in these same subjects.

The General Conference of 1843 felt so keenly the need for a proper understanding of the official position of the denomination on the matter of culture and education that it decided to print the following manifesto:

"As the Evangelical Association is charged by many, though unjustly, with looking upon learning, or rather a classical education of the ministry, as altogether superfluous and useless, yea even as dangerous and injurious, and despising, for this reason, all higher institutions of learning; this Conference feels itself called upon and under obligation, to declare and express its views on this subject in public, and to repeal thereby this false charge.

"It is indeed true, that this Conference believes and teaches, that all human wisdom, learning and knowledge, without a divine call and the unction of the Spirit, qualify no man for the Gospel ministry; and that a man, called of God to this office, and filled with the Holy Ghost and with power from on high, without great human learning, or as a comparatively illiterate man, can be a preacher of the Gospel and accomplish much good if he fears God and is conscientious in the discharge of his duties. But notwithstanding this, the Conference acknowledges and maintains, that learning in the common acceptance of the term, or a classical education, is in many respects of great advantage to a man who is called of God to the Gospel ministry, and endowed with the Holy Ghost, and enhances his usefulness; or in other words, that he who has the divine unction, and great learning, can, in many instances, and even generally, accomplish far more in the vineyard of the Lord, and toward the conversion of the world and the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom, than the unlearned man, though he may possess the same measure of divine unction and grace.

"Entertaining these views of the advantages of learning in a minister of the Gospel this Conference recommends to all its candidates for the ministry, and to all its ministers generally, to take proper measures to store their minds with as large an amount of useful information, as they possibly can, or to endeavor to become learned and literary men, who have also the unction of the Holy Spirit." (Signed by John Seybert and Joseph Long, Bishops; and Absalom B. Schaefer, secretary.)<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Quoted in *OH*, p. 367f.

John Dreisbach, now the Nestor of the church and highly regarded by all its members, caught the spirit of the times, which he knew better than any other to have been the spirit of the founder and early fathers as well, and wrote a strong appeal for a learned ministry in 1845 entitled "Teachers and Preachers Should Not Be Ignorant." He strongly admonished preachers and candidates for the ministry who had not received a proper school training to study privately and store their minds with useful knowledge, as being highly necessary to a successful minister of the gospel. He allowed that a classical education was not an absolute requirement for a minister but insisted that neither was it a disadvantage. He pleaded for a happy combination of learning sanctified by the Spirit of God as the finest background for usefulness in the ministry.

Soon another article entitled, "A Learned Ministry" appeared on the pages of *Der Christliche Botschafter* heartily endorsing Dreisbach's position and publicly asking Editor Adam Ettinger to express his views on the subject which it was felt would be appreciated in the church. While these discussions in print did not immediately bring into existence institutions for learning they had much to do with the creation of a sentiment in favor of education and institutions of higher learning. Just a year later the West Pennsylvania Conference organized an Educational Society for the purpose of supporting poor young men in their studies and procuring a proper library for the use of that entire conference. The educational development in the next few years progressed in two specific directions: the renewal of emphasis on catechetical instruction and the planning for and actual establishing of an educational institution in 1855.

### c. Catechisms and Catechetical Instruction

The renewed emphasis on catechetical instruction was a natural concomitant of the serious thinking of training the minds of old and young. Among these wholesome pietistic German people it was a foregone conclusion that knowledge of the Bible and the fundamental tenets of the faith was the most important form of all knowledge. Then, too, the second authorized catechism of the church, prepared by W. W. Orwig largely along the lines of the Schwenkfelder catechism, appeared in 1847 and was a natural stimulus to such study. This work was reprinted in Cleveland in 1860 and translated and printed in English in 1864. Periodically throughout all the years of the church, appeals are found inserted in the minutes of the various annual and general conferences for renewed zeal in this important matter of catechetical instruction.

One of the very first books printed by the church was a small catechism which John Dreisbach, then but a lad of nineteen, translated

into the German and which, by 1818, had gone through three editions. He had clearly stated his purpose in the brief introduction. It was not only a book for the children, with the answers to all questions as far as possible taken from the Bible to acquaint the children with Biblical language, but it was to be regarded also as a small systematic theology and a gathering of godly knowledge, appropriate for the careful study of preachers. It was designed "to give strength of character, a foundation to build a practical Christianity and the lead to further study."<sup>49</sup> To facilitate worship in connection with conducting a class in catechism, three German hymns were appended at the end of the small booklet.

The fourth annual conference in 1811 instructed the preachers to form classes in catechism on their circuit. That the catechism from time to time formed the basis of discussion and study in the class meetings is only to be expected. It was felt that the previous works were too mature for smaller children and so in 1839 the church published a juvenile catechism, graded for children from five to eight years of age. This work contained also an appendix of admonitions and prayers for children. It was reprinted a number of times and was in use for over seventy years. An English translation was ordered in 1859. Its title page states that it was designed for use in the Sunday Schools which had come to be a quite common practice. Memorized questions and answers were frequently listed with the earlier Sunday School reports as, for example, in a Sunday School report of the Jefferson Circuit in Wisconsin in 1856, "The memory work included six hundred Bible verses, fifteen hundred catechetical questions and three hundred hymn verses."<sup>50</sup> A Sunday School constitution published in the same paper in 1853 specified a closing period of fifteen minutes devoted to questions and answers from the catechism. That the suggestion was carried out is shown in a report of the East Germantown School of the Indiana Conference, "We also have instruction in catechism at the close of our Sunday Schools."<sup>51</sup>

The third major catechism of the church was the work of Bishop J. J. Esher, an eminent theologian who patterned his work somewhat after the catechisms of Dr. William Nast and Dr. Philip Schaff, especially the latter. The first German edition of this work appeared in Cleveland in 1882 and the English translation a year later. Bishop Thomas Bowman wrote an English catechism which was printed in 1905 and the official catechism of the United Evangelical Church appeared in 1901. There was a marked revival of interest and emphasis on the catechism in the episcopal messages to the general conferences

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<sup>49</sup> Dreisbach, John, *Catechism*, Harrisburg, 1809. Introduction.

<sup>50</sup> CB, 1856, p. 142.

<sup>51</sup> CB, 1854, p. 126.



and especially after the merger of the churches in 1922 the number of catechumens increased very rapidly so that there were about ten thousand catechumens enrolled in almost a thousand classes throughout the denomination in 1934. Although Bishop Esher presented a strong ecclesiastical emphasis, which he derived in part at least from Dr. Schaff in the Introduction of his *Catechism*, it nevertheless gives a good picture of the objectives of the leaders of the church in that day.

"The better our children and young people are indoctrinated in the teachings of their own church, the deeper will these teachings be implanted in their hearts, the more firmly will this faith be rooted in them, the more firmly also will they be engrafted in the life of the church, and the life and principles of the church in them."<sup>52</sup>

#### d. Educational Institutions

Although in private many leaders of the church had discussed the matter of an educational institution, no one dared to open the subject on the floor of the General Conference even as late as 1843. Four years later the matter was discussed thoroughly from all points of view and rather timidly the question of establishing a seminary was referred to the vote of the more than fifteen thousand members of the church. This same conference, on motion of W. W. Orwig, stated its position clearly as being against theological schools, called "preacher-factories" in common parlance. This action and the discussion which it entailed resulted somewhat from the very advanced positions which a few writers had expressed in the periodical shortly before the conference met. Surprise pervaded the entire conference then when the Rev. John Dreisbach moved,

"That a seminary for general sciences be established in the Evangelical Association with the consent of the majority of the members, connected with manual labor by the pupils, in order thereby to defray the expenses of tuition, board, et cetera, with the understanding that thereby no so-called 'preacher-factory' is intended, and it is expressly stipulated that it shall never be used for such a purpose, because according to our view, the preparation and sending out of Evangelical preachers is the work of God. Nevertheless we believe that it is our duty to put forth our efforts that the Evangelical Association may become enriched in the manifold branches of knowledge, which is without question very beneficial to every Christian and preacher and will be helpful to us in obtaining a correct knowledge of God and ourselves, and will render the Holy Scriptures more edifying to us."<sup>53</sup>

It was further resolved to submit the entire matter to the membership of the church by a referendum and, if a favorable vote ensued, the bishops and the Rev. John Dreisbach were to be the committee to

<sup>52</sup> Esher, J. J., *Catechism*, Cleveland, 1883, p. 5f.

<sup>53</sup> Quoted in *YH* (1), p. 386f.

carry the matter further and bring it before the annual conferences, which in turn were to select a director for the project. Although it was specifically stated that a plebescite should be announced on every charge and every member should have the privilege of voting, little was written about the matter in *Der Christliche Botschafter*. Also since no definite time had been set for the plebescite, there is little reason to wonder that the proposed school failed to materialize for lack of interest and support. In the East Pennsylvania Conference with 4,497 members, less than one-third voted, although the contest was not indecisive with 501 yeas and 852 nays. The leaders of this conference lost none of their optimism for a school, however, for in 1850 M. F. Maize, J. P. Leib, D. Saylor, Jacob Hammer and John Hammer were instructed to ascertain whether the public buildings at Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania, made vacant by the removal of the county seat of Schuylkill County to Pottsville, could be procured for the proposed school. No further mention of this matter appears. The first educational institution finally came eight years later when the West Pennsylvania Conference of 1854 established Union Seminary at New Berlin, Pennsylvania, which opened its doors in January, 1856.

Meanwhile bishops and presiding elders carefully supervised the studying of the young preachers, and the wide circulation of books and the periodicals was promoted throughout the denomination. Bishop Seybert frequently took thousands of religious books with him to the West where he sold some to persons who could buy them and gave copies to others who were poor. He annually allowed a liberal amount in his budget for the free distribution of these materials which he felt would promote the religious zeal of these German pietists in this country. At least one of the conferences resolved that the work of the American Tract Society was "universally useful" and one must believe that large quantities of the pamphlets from this press were widely distributed throughout the denomination. So, then, the interest was kept alive which in a few years was to bring this denomination to have its first school; and from this late beginning has developed the present splendid group of colleges and theological seminaries.

#### 54. THE CLERGY AND PREACHING

The rapid growth of the church from 1830 to 1850 and the complexity and difficulty of the problems which arose provided real tests for the comparatively few and, in most instances, untrained ministers of the Evangelical Association. After the three new conferences were formed in 1839 and the bishop was deprived of the power of moving ministers from one conference to another, the West Pennsylvania Conference in particular was in great need of preachers. This conference published a pastoral letter appealing for men for its ministry and also

besought the ministers and laity to observe a day of fasting and prayer, imploring God for aid in their crisis. The newly elected Bishop John Seybert felt very keenly the need of increasing the number of ministers in the church and also of improving their quality. One of his very first official acts as a bishop was the writing of the following episcopal letter:

"An Appeal to the Ministry of the Evangelical Association

"Dearly beloved! Inasmuch as the cause of the Lord rests heavily on my heart, and as I feel inwardly stirred and constrained, to devote myself to His work by day and night without ceasing, with soul and body, therefore I desire, through *Der Christliche Botschafter*, to encourage our Evangelical friends, and in general all who love God, in this important cause, which also has been done by other brethren, and not without good effect upon sincere souls.

"But, as hitherto appeals have been made principally to the lay-members, I would at this time speak a word to their leaders, and communicate my thoughts and convictions to them in a simple and upright manner, especially since at the present time there seems to be a greater lack of active ministers in our Association than ever before."

After assuring his readers that he knew the fault lay with men and not with God, he continued:

"There is an especial want among us of the following qualities which the Master possessed, . . . the spirit of humility . . . that voluntary submission to the shame of the cross . . . that willingness to suffer afflictions and tribulations without number, even unto death. . . .

"If there were more of the Spirit and qualities of Jesus among us in general, there would be less of the cares of the world to absorb our time, engage our attention and exhaust our energies; we would deny ourselves of all earthly things, and, without fear of want . . . we would surmount all difficulties, in order to execute the command of Christ, to bring the world the glad message of her crucified Redeemer. There would not be so many unanswered Macedonian calls from Upper Canada and other localities, where they are in need of true shepherds and true preachers of the Gospel. The thousands of poor Germans in the states of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, et cetera, who wander amid perils in the moral desert in great throngs, like sheep without a shepherd, would in that case soon be fed with the Bread of Life.

"If the Spirit of Christ were dominant in us, there would not be so many who, in their best years excuse themselves from active work, and locate, for the purpose of pursuing worldly objects. And many others would forthwith extricate themselves from their temporal complications to enter the Gospel ministry. . . . many have located before they reach complications to enter the Gospel ministry. . . . many have located before they reach their thirtieth year. Just when by reason of practise and experience they are properly fitted for this important office, and when, by reason of physical strength and intellectual maturity, they could be eminently useful to the Church in defending and proclaiming



her doctrines with ability and manly courage, they take the hand from the plough and look back.

"What then? Who will go into the battle-field where the fight is fiercest, and maintain his position under the banner of Jesus unto death? Who is willing and ready to die in the field? Do you know of one such? *I know of one. . .*" <sup>54</sup>

Is it any wonder that upon such an appeal young men volunteered for the work of the ministry and parents came to feel more than ever, that it is the highest honor to any family to have a son, even the eldest, enter the Christian ministry?

It is almost incredible that with so little common background and without any common training, there were so few irregularities in ministerial practice and in the doctrines these early ministers of the church taught. In a previous chapter we have seen how such discipline of the severest sort was applied to keep the ranks of the clergy above all reproach and free from the slightest trace of heretical doctrine. Occasionally, however, a strained feeling arose between the various sections of the church. Orwig writes of such a feeling which existed about 1838 between the East and the West, both of which had apparently forgotten what each owed to the other. The very next year three conferences were formed from the previous two and many of the prerogatives which had previously belonged to the old Eastern Conference were now discontinued. A few in the East wished still to maintain priority of influence and others in the West were very quick to sense any undue assumption of special privilege by their Eastern brethren. Although the church never suffered greatly from sectionalism, yet it has not been entirely free from this evil. Orwig prescribed the correct solution when he wrote that "all such feelings and prejudices can only produce mischief and that all the leaders of the church and the ministers generally must oppose this evil and keep themselves free from it." <sup>55</sup>

The only doctrinal disturbances of any proportion occurred at the very beginning of this period. In the congregation at Orwigsburg, which had grown so rapidly during the decade before, George Kimmel organized a schismatic group who temporarily halted the good work there and divided the membership on the question of the observance of "feet-washing" as a religious ceremony. Undoubtedly he had come under the influence of some of the small Anabaptist groups in Eastern Pennsylvania who still adhere to this practice. But Kimmel was very radical and insisted that this practice was absolutely essential for salvation. The leaders of the church in Orwigsburg were very patient with him and tried to show him the error of his emphasis. Kimmel, on the

<sup>54</sup> Spreng, S. P., *Life of Seybert*, pp. 202-205.

<sup>55</sup> *OH*, p. 280.

contrary, was obstinate and endeavored to secure as many members as possible to follow him in this and other fanatical teachings for which he was well known. After all efforts to reclaim him from his errors were futile, his membership was dropped from the congregation or, more kindly stated as one record has it, "They could bear with him no longer." With the restoration of tranquility in the congregation, the work in Orwigsburg prospered greatly as before.

Much more serious, because of its wider influence upon the entire church, was the deposition of John Hamilton for heresy by the Eastern Conference of 1831. Hamilton had retired from the active work of the conference the previous spring on the basis of avowed physical infirmities. In reality he was then already planning and soon afterward began a schismatic movement, which he had hoped would lead away from the Evangelical Association most of the English preachers among whom, indeed, he had been somewhat of a leader. He pretended to establish a Scriptural church on the old "Albright foundation" as he put it, which would not be a "sect." He had gone so far as to set the date for the first conference of his proposed "church" at which he had expected to find at least a dozen or more preachers. Disillusionment was his when, on the appointed day, he found himself quite alone.

Charges were preferred against him in 1831 and he was finally deposed for failing to retract his errors contained in a pamphlet which he had printed and circulated during the year. That very year the conference adopted a rule, prompted no doubt by this crisis, prohibiting preachers from publishing any manuscripts which have not met with the approval of their annual conferences. Hamilton was a very talented and popular preacher and at first it looked as though most of the English preachers would side with him. Before he was expelled from the church, Hamilton had actually led most of these English preachers so far that even though they did not adhere to him any longer, they did leave the denomination. This was a very serious blow to the English work and was felt for many years.

After several years Hamilton once again gathered a few followers and on September 28, 1833 printed a constitution of a sort describing the kind of a church which he now pretended to establish and which would not be just another sect. This document began with a striking resolution:

"That we will oppose all the evils with their causes, which arise from partisanship, both in Church and State, and adopt the following rules for the formation and establishing of Christian Societies."<sup>56</sup>

Here followed eight general rules, half of which at least were more doctrines than rules. The concluding section listed eleven reasons why

<sup>56</sup> Quoted in *YH*(1), p. 209.

he and his friends felt they could not join any of the existing sects, all of which were without doubt simply the creation of someone who was very erratic and had apparently developed a controlling aversion to sectarianism. The constitution was signed by Hamilton and four others. A short time afterward, Hamilton apparently gave up his schismatic efforts and was received as a minister in the Lutheran Church.

Among the signers of his constitution was one other minister of the Evangelical Association, the Rev. James Bruer (Brewer), who spoke both German and English fluently. Although Bruer was apparently enamored of Hamilton's pleasing personality and manner so that he followed him without catching his aversion to sectarianism, he was enough of a thinker to develop a heterodox position in his own right, one regarding sanctification. In 1833 he preached at a camp meeting in Virginia and clearly expounded his idea that an entirely sanctified person had nothing further to do in this world, and hence would be called into eternity at the moment he was made entirely holy. When complaints were lodged against him, he immediately withdrew from the church. It has been asserted that he humbled himself and became reconciled with the church before he died a few years later. The very sad result of all these proceedings was the irreparable loss to the English work of the church which consequently ceased almost entirely.

The psychological effect of these two years, with several erratic persons and problems of heresy to be dealt with, was greater cautiousness in each conference resulting in stricter examination and closer supervision of the ministry. In the Eastern Conference alone in 1832, ten ministers were deposed from office. Of one of these it was simply stated that he was not qualified for the office. Now while there may be common agreement that such a high standard for its ministers might serve every denomination to advantage even at present, there is no doubt that the fear of a repetition of their experience of the preceding years caused these conference leaders to apply their rules with excessive rigor. No less a conservative than W. W. Orwig himself admits that many of these men might have been saved for the church by the exercise of more patience, forbearance and kindness. It was somewhat of an anomalous situation that a church which did so little to provide a common training and background for its clergy should be so rigorous in demanding uniformity of faith and practice.

One of the strongest personalities in the conference at that time was the Rev. Thomas Buck. He was a very strict pietist and wielded such a power over his fellow ministers that he was often able to sway the opinions of a conference according to his discretion. He is generally considered to have been a strict disciplinarian bordering on the severe, yet, withal, kindhearted and considerate especially of beginners. Buck



was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, January 27, 1789, and as a boy became a member of the church. At the age of thirty-four he entered the ministry and for two terms beginning in 1828 and 1832 he served as a presiding elder. After an interval of four years in retirement, he was once more chosen a presiding elder in 1838. The general conference honored him by naming him the publisher in 1843 but he died on October 26th of that year, after a very short service in this capacity, and was buried at New Berlin.

The laity was also constantly under the same type of strict supervision and many were expelled from the church. It was a rather unusual procedure, however, to discover a layman, as did the Rev. William Yost in one of the earlier years of his ministry, who, upon hearing the minister read his name as having been expelled, came to the pastor and said that he had received proper treatment and was not really fit to be a member of the church. He begged the Rev. Yost not to avoid him or cast him off, and indeed was soon won back into the church.<sup>57</sup>

The one doctrine which caused more misunderstanding than any other in the history of the Evangelical Church was the doctrine of entire sanctification and Christian perfection. In their zeal to magnify the power of a transcendent diety these pietists constantly taught and preached the necessity of seeking Christian perfection in this life. The definitions of the term "perfection" and its implications for life here and hereafter sometimes led to confusion and even the preferring of charges of heresy, as will be seen in the study of the next period.

That this procedure would have followed no later than 1851 in the case of the Rev. Nicholas Gehr is certain, had he not resigned his important position as editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and *The Evangelical Messenger* in the spring of 1849. Gehr had reprinted an article on "Christian Holiness—Christian Perfection" from *The Christian Visitor* in *The Evangelical Messenger* of September 22, 1848, and in an accompanying section had endorsed the article. The article caused much uneasiness among the defenders of the doctrine of holiness because it stated "that the primary elements of holiness, sanctification, or Christian perfection are always implanted in the soul at regeneration." The West Pennsylvania Conference of which W. W. Orwig was the secretary on March 14, 1849, requested Bishop Long to admonish Gehr in a friendly way. Since no agreement was reached and Gehr saw that charges would be preferred against him, he printed his resignation in *Der Christliche Botschafter*, on March 1, 1849:

"I am charged with deviating principles, especially on sanctification. . . . I am still unconvinced of any errors, I cannot resolve upon a change of my convictions. . . . After mature consideration, I freely

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<sup>57</sup> YR, p. 99f.

resign my office . . . with the most innocent feelings and the deepest pain. Respectfully and in love, N. Gehr."

While most of the clergy were not constantly watching for irregularities or points of variance in the teachings and writings of their fellow ministers, it must be said that several of the more conservative leaders of the church, who were also among its most capable men, felt a great responsibility for the preservation of the doctrines of the church, especially the one regarding entire sanctification and Christian perfection, and in effect placed themselves in the position of guardians of the faith. Editor Gehr discovered the loss of confidence on the part of his fellow ministers who felt that he was not sufficiently Evangelical in doctrine and in other respects to be the editor of the church papers. Rather than precipitate a doctrinal trial, he withdrew from the church and became a minister and editor in the Reformed Church in the United States where he happily spent the remaining years of his life.

Immediately upon the resignation of Editor Gehr, the publisher, the Rev. Henry Fischer, and the publishing assistant, William Bersch, combined their efforts and the papers appeared regularly. Finally the Rev. W. W. Orwig was recalled to the editorship.

One of the greatest forces in the entire church which made for consistency and for keeping the Christian life in conformity with Christian faith and profession was the strong personality of Bishop John Seybert. Frequently he exhorted laymen and clergy alike to be consistent in their Christian living.

"How necessary it is," he once said, "that professors of religion demonstrate that which they orally profess, by living and acting in conformity with the Word of God, lest the name of God be blasphemed. . . . The unchristian conduct of those who have been enlightened, always was a greater obstacle to the progress of Christ's cause than all the bloody persecutions that have ever raged, and more detrimental to the religion of Jesus than all the malicious attacks of skeptics and atheists."<sup>58</sup>

On another occasion in a frank denunciation of the inconsistency of some of the church members in Berks County, Pennsylvania, he spoke of their noisy and unchristian conduct at a dance on the Monday after they just passed through the sacred season of Good Friday and Easter. In a letter he wrote:

"This Christian (?) rabble howled so loudly that they were actually heard two miles away. These are the people who cannot bear the least noise, not even a stifled sob in Divine service. But I have not heard that they thought their shameful frolic too noisy! O consistency!"<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Spreng, S. P., *Life of Seybert*, p. 87f.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

Constant concern for the young ministers under his supervision caused Bishop Seybert frequently to resort to letter-writing when he was unable for a considerable length of time to visit them. Several examples are extant of letters of very similar nature which were written to different young men. Frequently he began, as in this case:

"Beloved Brother in Christ! When I was with you last, I greatly rejoiced at what I saw and heard; and for what my heart felt I rejoice even yet. . . . See well to it, both in your public preaching and in private conversation among the people, that the newly converted, and all professors of religion, are encouraged to growth in grace, . . . See well to it also, that you keep everything in good order in your society, so that your successor on the charge may find delight in the excellent condition of things in the church, which you commit to him, . . . . Take heed, however, unto yourself, that you lose none of your diligence in house-visiting. Do not be a lazy preacher, who is satisfied if he has only preached and afterwards had a good dinner. Experience has taught me that we can at times do more good among converted and unconverted by visiting, than by all our preaching. . . . See to it also, that you do not become a careless, indifferent servant in the service of the Gospel, who neglects his appointments. . . . I also have this confidence in you, that you will take pains to be an industrious sincere and unblameable workman in the vineyard; . . . Therefore, have I written thus to you."<sup>60</sup>

In a similar vein he wrote the Rev. Philip Schnatz in a letter now on exhibition in the museum of the Historical Society:

"See to it, that you do not lose your diligence in making calls, . . . . Therefore a preacher with only two talents with diligence in his calling at homes will accomplish three times as much with his preaching, as a lazy one, whom God has given five talents. . . . Also see to it, that you will not become an indifferent preacher in serving your appointments, . . . ."

One may well understand Bishop Seybert's tremendous influence over young men when again in this letter is found the inevitable paragraph of confidence:

"Having confidence in you, that you are a diligent, righteous, peace loving worker in the vineyard of the Lord, who divides the word of truth aright. . . ."

During these two decades after 1830 the salaries of the ministers were gradually raised to be somewhat more commensurate with their needs and in some instances parsonages were provided for pastors. Until 1835 married ministers, regardless of the size of their families, received twice the amount of the salary of an unmarried minister. The

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211f.



General Conference of 1835 revised this ratio so that a married preacher without children was to receive three halves the salary of a single man; one who had one or two children seven-fourths; and one who had three or more children double the salary of an unmarried minister. Since this materially increased the salaries of the single men at the expense of the married men with small families, the rule was revised four years later. Because salaries depended upon the gifts received for this purpose, they were rarely paid in full. In 1841 for the first time the ministers received their full salaries and there was a small surplus to be placed in the treasury. In that year the *Discipline* allowed an unmarried preacher \$60, a married one \$105 with \$15 for each child under fourteen, and reasonable travelling expenses in addition. The General Conference of 1843 raised these allowances to \$100 for a single preacher and \$200 for married men with \$25 for each child under fourteen. This conference also made better provision for the care of the superannuated itinerants and their families.

Until 1843 all the conferences shared and shared alike in the matter of salary but with the other important changes in salaries that year it was also decided that the annual conferences in the future were to be independent of each other in this respect. Previously the conferences with the larger contributions had helped the weaker ones and those conferences which fell short had drawn more freely on the charitable funds and the profits of the printing establishment. Henceforth, however, each conference had to care for itself. As late as 1848, the publishing house was contributing over \$2,000 annually toward the support of ministers.

In 1844 the ministers of the East Pennsylvania Conference voted that any gifts received by preachers were not to be charged as salary.<sup>61</sup> This latter rule apparently helped all the men a very great deal, especially the Rev. William Yost who served two years on Pine Grove Circuit shortly thereafter. When he left this appointment in 1856 he wrote:

"Under the strictly economical rules of the church, at this time, a deacon, even though married, had to serve for two years for an unmarried preacher's remuneration, that being the princely sum of one hundred dollars a year. The kindhearted friends at Pine Grove and Tremont took this fact into account, and loaded us with provisions, and gave us money donations to the extent that at the end of two years, though I had received only my salary of two hundred dollars, I still had three hundred dollars left. Quite a unique bit of financiering."<sup>62</sup>

As late as 1855, Bishop Long who had means of his own, representing the sentiment of some of the older ministers, who had preached for many years for a mere pittance, opposed the further raising of salaries

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<sup>61</sup> *BL*, p. 108.

<sup>62</sup> *YR*, p. 131.

on the ground that it was unnecessary.<sup>63</sup> The rule of 1843 making the annual conferences independent of each other soon made it possible to take into account the differences of living costs between the Eastern and Western areas of the church. Also by 1848 the East Pennsylvania Conference which had ministers serving in the larger cities was able to take into account the higher living costs there when it resolved to make all the charges independent of each other in matters of salaries.<sup>64</sup>

Bishop Seybert, always an advocate of good living for the ministry of the church, long before they were generally provided insisted that the church should erect parsonages for the married ministers. Bishop Spreng writes of Seybert's attitudes:

"About this time (1831), Seybert began to urge the need of parsonages, and was successful in having them erected upon the various charges of his district. He was a pioneer in this matter, . . . He was unalterably opposed, as it is well known, to all extravagance, but he advocated substantial and comfortable living for the ministry, and was anxious that everything, the temporalities of the church not excepted, be conducted decently and in order. He believed the ministry of the Evangelical Association would be more efficient if their temporal wants were adequately provided for."<sup>65</sup>

About 1838 all the conferences took actions urging the erection of parsonages and soon suitable homes for ministers were being built in most parts of the church.

Very few of the sermons of the ministers in the early church are extant save several by the Revs. John Dreisbach, Adam Ettinger and Bishops Seybert and Long. However, a bit of an insight into the type of preaching of this period is granted through an article from the hand of the Rev. Charles Hammer who through his connections at the printing house knew most of these men very well. Their sermons were not superficial or sensational efforts delivered for effect. The subjects of their preaching were chiefly as follows:

"The Fall and Depravity of Man; Redemption through Christ; Genuine Repentance; Saving Faith; Regeneration by the Holy Spirit; Divine Sonship; The Witness of the Holy Spirit; Sanctification and Christian Perfection; Self-Denial and Following Christ; Christian Duties; Freedom from Sin through Jesus' Blood; the Difference Between True and False Christianity; the Spiritual Declension of the Church; Separation from the World; Putting Off the Old and Putting on the New Man; and also eschatological subjects, viz.: Death, Resurrection, Judgment, Heaven, Hell, etc. They chose their texts accordingly and endeavored to prove every point with appropriate passages of Holy Writ, . . . At that time preachers knew nothing of sketch-

<sup>63</sup> YR, p. 122f.

<sup>64</sup> BL, p. 120.

<sup>65</sup> Spreng, S. P., *Life of Seybert*, p. 123f.

books, they did not preach on non-essentials, much less on the events of the day or eccentric themes which awaken superficial sensation, . . . Preachers generally lived what they preached; in their pastoral visits and conversations there was no levity, nor foolish talk, nor unseemly conduct prevailing; they would speak to the consciences of the people, exhort and pray with them, by which means many were awakened and converted."<sup>66</sup>

Like the preaching of most pietists, the sermons of the early Evangelical preachers dealt with doctrinal and Biblical subjects, and with such irrefutable authority as a background, they denounced sin violently and brought hundreds and thousands to repentance. While the greatest weakness of the church in this period was fanaticism in preaching and in the conduct of services, which in some instances led to the loss of important leaders like the Rev. Jacob Vogelbach in Philadelphia, there was an increasing number of men who, like their founder, desired that worship should be conducted "decently and in order." Many of these ministers were not unmindful of the pericopal or church calendar year in their preaching. The Rev. Francis Hoffman, who was one of the best of the earlier preachers, preached on "Pentecost" and the Rev. William Yost preached on appropriate themes on Ascension Day and Good Friday. The minutes of the East Pennsylvania Conference of 1846 have a reference to a fast appointed for "Monday after Whitsuntide."

In 1840 a fast was set for July 4th in East Pennsylvania Conference, a very unusual but quite appropriate way of celebrating the national holiday. The West Pennsylvania Conference also began the custom of an annual day of fasting and in 1840 placed their emphasis on prayers for much needed ministerial recruits. In some instances it appears that annual conferences set fast days in the spring and fall seasons. In this respect the early Evangelical leaders were of similar mind and spirit with Bishop Otterbein of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ who as early as January 1, 1785 had set fast days for his congregation in Baltimore.<sup>67</sup> Scattered reading has also brought to light specific references in diaries and correspondence which show that the Revs. J. J. Kopp, Thomas Buck, John Seybert, and Joseph Long, practised fasting as a personal habit of devotion and discipline. It is reasonable to assume that they were only a few of the numerous preachers who like them must also have observed this practice. Bishop Long once said, "If others think they can get on in the way to Heaven without fasting I can not."<sup>68</sup>

Although there is no disciplinary direction to that effect, there is evidence that a number of the early Evangelical congregations observed "love-feasts" which were apparently like those observed occasionally by

<sup>66</sup> Quoted in YH(1), p. 445f.

<sup>67</sup> Drury, A. W., *op. cit.*, p. 124.

<sup>68</sup> Yeakel, R., *Bishop Joseph Long*, p. 23.



the Methodist Church even today. Such a service included the sharing of bread among the laity and alternate praying and singing with personal testimonies interspersed in the service. In some localities it is possible that it may have included eating "from a common dish" as this rite is observed among the Church of the Brethren (Dunkers) who were very numerous near Lebanon, Pennsylvania, where an Evangelical "love-feast" was held in 1837. Another was conducted in Baltimore on February 5, 1841, where the observance of such ceremonies certainly must have dated back to the time of Otterbein.

From the very beginning the sacrament of the Lord's supper was held in the highest honor in the Evangelical Association, and it was the custom to keep the Friday previous to the quarterly meeting as a day of fasting and preparation for the coming sacrament. Saturday afternoon was devoted to the quarterly conference which under the supervision of the presiding elder transacted the business for the charge or circuit, and also carefully inquired into the character and conduct of all the members of the congregation who were candidates for participation in the Holy Communion the following day.

The presiding elders usually preached on Saturday afternoon and on Sunday morning, and frequently a second time on Sunday. It was the custom that at least one "sharp sermon" should be preached at each of these quarterly meetings. An old Evangelical proverb describes these sermons as a time when "Jerusalem was searched through with lanterns." The brief sermon on Sunday morning was usually an explanation of the significance of the sacrament concluding with a strong exhortation to self-examination. Under these circumstances the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper became a most impressive service and members travelled for miles to be able to share in these precious meetings. It was not unusual for the members of the congregation where the services were held on that particular week-end to entertain at Sunday dinner the visiting friends and members from other congregations on the circuit. In some cases the visitors shared in a common lunch which was spread on the lawn belonging to the church.

Not only the manner but the dress of the Evangelical preachers was quite unique so that it was possible to identify them in this way. Usually they were dressed very plainly but neatly, wearing white neckties and white hats. Their faces were smoothly shaven and many of them observed a precise, almost military gait and manner without any approach to foppishness. Many of these customs were distinctly European. With all the emphasis upon the work in the German language and the reception of many German men into the ministry, it was quite natural that this spirit and manner was developed. As early as 1823 John C. Reisner, a European, was received into the itinerancy and after him John G. Zinser, John J. Kopp, Christian Hummel, Jacob Vogel-

bach, Frederick Kreckler, Michael Eis, William Münz, John M. Sindlinger, Christian Holl, Philip Schwilly, William Schmidt, Henry Stetzel, Christian Meyers, John J. Esher (Escher) and still others. These men were welcomed by the church and in every respect were received as their American brethren.

While the style and manner of preaching varied greatly among these early preachers, their aims were always the same and each shared in the great concern for the success of all. At the quarterly and especially at the camp meetings, it was the usual custom for the clergy to sit back of the minister who was preaching and often more than one sermon was preached at a service. Should the preacher on some occasions lack the unction which was necessary to bring the commonly desired results, someone of the ministers back of him might pull his coat as a sign that he should give way to another preacher who would take charge of the service from that point. It was just such a spirit of coöperation among the early ministers of the church which made for the harmonious development of the conferences and the constant expansion of the influence of the denomination. Discipline has been shown to have been very rigid but most of the disciplinary measures were necessitated among the local ministers rather than among the regular itinerants. Withal the leaders of the church knew that there was a very close correlation between the permanency of the work and the quality of the ministry of the church. Bishop Seybert once wrote on this point:

"So long as our ministry is right, lives right, preaches right, and rightly applies the discipline, so long the Association will remain right; for with the ministry the church will stand or fall."<sup>69</sup>

## 55. SOCIAL ISSUES

Considering the limited environment and the few opportunities for educational and cultural improvement among the members and even the clergy of the Evangelical Association of this period, it is almost incredible that they should have taken so large an interest in the crucial social issues of their generation. Their pietistic background, however, led them to take an even greater interest in matters of personal and group conduct than in the refinements of theology. The second *Discipline* published in 1817 contained a very brief statement about the origin and development of the denomination and its rules and articles of faith. Then followed the injunction:

"And whoever will take the pains to peruse these Articles of Faith and Discipline may readily see the clear and simple way the Evangelical Association, as a plain people, not educated or trained in Universities, has chosen for itself to live and walk according to the Word of God, and so also to think, and to serve God Almighty with one an-

<sup>69</sup> Quoted in *YH*(1), p. 455.

other in observing these fitting instructions through the grace which the Lord has imparted unto us." <sup>70</sup>

This statement continued to appear in subsequent issues of the *Discipline* until in 1825 when it was amplified as follows:

"And in accord with Christian regulations to labor together with all upright Christians in the building of His glorious kingdom on earth."

These general statements of social purpose and the later expression of a desire for coöperation with all true Christians in their efforts were specifically defined through these years by actions of the annual and especially the general conferences on particular personal and social problems such as slavery, temperance and prohibition, the use of tobacco, the observance of the Sabbath, buying and selling, the manner of dress, and even on frugality, charity and liberality.

As early as 1823 the Evangelical Association is known to have received members of the colored race into its fellowship and to a limited degree has done so continuously since. On several occasions colored families significantly aided the work of the church by opening their homes as preaching places, as in the case of Mr. J. Grove in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and Mr. Wilson in Orwigsburg. In the latter instance when the closing of a schoolhouse had temporarily stayed the work of the Evangelical preachers in that vicinity, Mr. Wilson's home became the birthplace of the great Orwigsburg revival.

Although slavery was practised widely in some areas where the Evangelical Church was located, the denomination never sanctioned traffic in human beings. The sixth rule for members ratified by the General Conference of 1816 and printed in the second *Discipline* the following year states:

"To avoid all manner of violence, unbecoming tyranny and unmerciful or rash treatment, whereby we or others might suffer either in body or soul, such as quarreling, brawling, and hatred, brother going to law with brother, recompensing evil for evil, rendering railing for railing, or of buying and selling of men and women, whereby slavery is introduced or promoted." <sup>71</sup>

A section "of Slavery" was added to the *Discipline* by the General Conference of 1839 and, although the minutes of this conference do not contain any specific statement on slavery, it may be inferred from the current issues of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and the article which appeared in the next *Discipline* that all members of the church were forbidden to own slaves or to engage in the slave traffic.

From the very beginning the Evangelical Association was opposed to the use of alcoholic drinks and the founder himself was a total abstainer

<sup>70</sup> *Discipline*, 1809, p. 3 and 1817, p. 3.

<sup>71</sup> *Discipline* 1809, p. 24 and 1817, p. 22.



in a time when this standard was unusual even among the clergy. The very first rules for membership in the church which appeared in the *Discipline* of 1809 prohibited the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage.<sup>72</sup> The rules in the second *Discipline* urged members "also to avoid intemperance and uncleanness, of whatever kind it may be, especially drunkenness and unnecessary use of strong drink."<sup>73</sup> The prohibition of the use or selling of intoxicating liquors by members of the Evangelical Church as it now stands in the *Discipline* was introduced by the General Conference of 1839. By that time many of the preachers of the church had become ardent supporters of prohibition and frequently spoke on the subject in their pulpits or in connection with special temperance programs. One of the best supporters in this respect was Bishop John Seybert. Bishop Seybert described a convert in Ohio who for eighteen years before his conversion had been a drunkard and was so hardened and intemperate that he frequently drank three quarts of brandy daily. Such a transformation required more than catechetical instruction. Writing of his work in Tioga County, Pennsylvania in 1838, he explained:

"When we began our work a few years ago in this region, the religious aspect of society was sad indeed. False teachers and the devil confused and desolated everything, so that profanity, gluttony, intoxication, Sabbath-breaking and all sorts of vices were terribly prevalent. The passion for drink was so great, that brandy was lugged on their shoulders a distance of twenty miles, over the Allegheny mountains, rather than be deprived of it.

"Soon, however, some of the worst swearers began to pray, and some of the worst drunkards became sober, while some of the most quarrelsome received peace from God and became decent, peaceable citizens."<sup>74</sup>

And knowing that Bishop Seybert was never given to exaggeration, this is conclusive evidence of the type of influence which these preachers of high moral and social standards wielded in the communities where they lived and travelled. A similar result was described in an article in *Der Christliche Botschafter* written by J. G. Bertsch from Loyalsock, Pennsylvania, under the date of February 16, 1839. After describing the faithfulness of the members and their zeal for winning others into the church which resulted in the growth of the class to twenty-three members, he continues:

"Many others are in the net of the gospel, the light shines with increased brightness, and ungodliness of every kind, especially drunken-

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, p. 25.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, 1817, p. 23.

<sup>74</sup> Spreng, S. P., *Life of Seybert*, p. 187.

ness, has considerably decreased. A tavern-keeper said, that where he used to sell five barrels of liquor, he now sold scarcely one any more. Thus our country has greatly improved, since the pure doctrine of the Gospel is preached here."

The open opposition to intemperance constantly assumed larger proportions throughout the denomination. By 1852 the East Pennsylvania Conference appointed the Revs. J. C. Farnsworth, M. F. Maize, and W. L. Reber a committee to draft a petition for a re-consideration of the license system then in vogue and the introduction of the Maine law in its stead. This petition was drafted, signed by all the members of that conference and sent to the legislature in session at Harrisburg. Throughout the years since then many ministers have given prominent place to the cause of prohibition and a number of them have served on a part or full time basis with temperance organizations and agencies.

It is also interesting to see that the Church of the United Brethren in Christ took very definite action against slavery at their General Conference of 1821 and the resolution was printed in their *Discipline* which appeared that year. The question of temperance had to wait until 1833 for definite treatment, and in 1841 their preachers and laymen were forbidden "to make or vend ardent spirits."<sup>75</sup>

Among the very first to disapprove of the use of alcoholic beverages in this country were the Methodists and the Church of the Brethren (Dunkards). The answer to question No. 23 in the minutes of the 1780 conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church states that they disapproved of distilling grain into liquor and would disown friends who would not renounce that practice. In the very next year the Dunkards in session declared:

"Concerning distilleries, we heartily counsel all brethren who have distilleries that they should by all means endeavor to put them away."

By fair comparison then it is evident that the Evangelical Church has from its beginning and from the beginning of the temperance movement been one of the most ardent supporters of sobriety.

The Evangelical Association was born in a section of the country which is perhaps better adapted naturally for the growing of tobacco than any other in the entire country. It was only natural, then that many laymen and ministers too, who engaged in farming, should raise and in many instances use tobacco in various forms. It must indeed have provoked quite a discussion when the Eastern Conference, which included this rich tobacco growing region, voted in 1838:

"That the universal use of tobacco in our day is a great evil, that we will unanimously protest against it, and that no preacher among us shall be allowed to engage in its traffic."<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Drury, A. W., *op. cit.*, p. 337 ff.

<sup>76</sup> *BL*, p. 90.

For many years however this rule was by no means universally observed even among the clergy. Many of the leaders, including especially Bishop Seybert and the Rev. Henry Niebel, on numerous occasions, both in churches and at camp meetings, spoke emphatically against the tobacco habit. At times Niebel pictured the misuse of tobacco so vividly that men threw away their pipes, cigars and plugs of tobacco and at once turned their backs on this evil. These sudden conversions, however, were not in every instance permanent.

It is significant that no resolution against the use of tobacco was passed at the General Conference of 1839 which denounced intemperance and slavery and which followed so soon after the ruling of the East Pennsylvania Conference of 1838 against the use of tobacco. Apparently there was no unanimity on the matter and so no mention is made of it in these minutes, although it seems incredible that this subject should not have been discussed at that conference. In fact no official action denouncing the use of tobacco as a sin was ever taken by the highest body of the church and the first official action of a general conference came as late as 1867 when it was resolved:

"That we regard the daily habitual use of tobacco, as smoking, chewing and snuffing, highly improper, conflicting with good manners and Christian purity, . . . by which health is injured, religious services often hindered, and much money, enormous sums, spent unnecessarily." <sup>77</sup>

The sentiment against the use of tobacco among the laity has spread most widely in the Western areas of the church where its use has been entirely forbidden on camp and assembly grounds. The insistence of Bishop Seybert in asking candidates for the ministry whether they were free from the use of tobacco, although he had no disciplinary right to ask this question, led to the continuance of that practice by the conferences, and its later inclusion in the *Discipline*. The episcopal messages to the more recent sessions of the general conference have usually contained a paragraph deploring the wider spread of the use of tobacco especially in the form of cigarettes and particularly among women. While these statements in the recent years have been only in the form of "deploring" or "noting with alarm" they have usually carried specific injunctions as in 1926, "That through personal influence and public speech this evil be attacked." <sup>78</sup>

Already by the turn to the twentieth century the use of tobacco among the clergy had become negligible. The Rev. William Yost whose long ministry was drawing to a close and who had lived in the days when tobacco was commonly used by laity and clergy writes of this period:

"By the strong resolutions of the General Conference and annual conferences against the use of the weed and by annual conferences

<sup>77</sup> *GCF*, 1867, p. 65.

<sup>78</sup> *GCF*, 1926, p. 175.



adopting the rule not to receive into the itinerancy any who were indulging in the habit, our ministry by this time has become free with but few exceptions.”<sup>79</sup>

Another of the social concepts of the early Evangelicals was the very strict observance of the Lord’s Day. The first disciplines contained a fourth rule to be observed by all members:

“To avoid profaning the day of the Lord . . . especially to refrain from all forms of spirit-dissipating work such as buying, selling, engaging or transacting business, making visits which are unnecessary or without serious motive, and taking of pleasure walks, as well as all other worldly reflections, thinking or contriving on the Lord’s day.”<sup>80</sup>

All through this period from 1830 to 1850 there was continued emphasis upon proper conduct on Sunday. Only necessary chores were supposed to be done on this day and the church frowned severely on all jovial gatherings and feasts which might be enjoyed by the membership in the interval between the services of quarterly or other meetings. It was maintained that it is better to observe Sunday as a day of fasting rather than as a day of feasting. In many respects the freedom of the children on Sunday was much circumscribed and their observance of the day resembled very closely that of the New England children on the Puritan Sunday.

Frugality, necessitated by the comparatively small incomes of these German people, and modesty, required by their pietistic outlook, were a happy combination in the lives of early Evangelicals. Following the General Rules for members of the church in the *Discipline* of 1817 there was a special paragraph:

“Though we are persuaded that dress can save none, be it ever so plain, if he be not clothed with the garment of salvation, and covered with the robe of righteousness, through Christ; yet, it is undeniable, that sumptuous attire is unbecoming of true Christians; and, that each of our fellow-members may be appraised thereof, be it known, that none shall be permitted to wear the following articles: (1) ear and finger-rings; (2) curls and the powdering of hair; unbecoming ruffles and scallops, or bunches of ribbons on any piece of clothing, and the such like.

“On the other hand, we insist on neatness, cleanliness and decency and that members dress modestly, economically and well, with shamefacedness and sobriety, as the Apostle writes.”<sup>81</sup>

This paragraph was changed from time to time with regard to the prohibited articles of dress. The West Pennsylvania Conference of

<sup>79</sup> YR, p. 296.

<sup>80</sup> *Discipline*, 1809, p. 23; 1817, p. 24.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 1817, p. 30.

1849, for example, petitioned the general conference following to prohibit the wearing of veils. In the latter half of the nineteenth century this rule was modified to forbid the wearing of articles named and prohibited in the Holy Scriptures. This emphasis on the simplicity of dress was due in part to an even stricter emphasis on the subject by Dunkers and Mennonites in whose midst the Evangelical Association was born. As late as our century, some of the women of the Evangelical Association wore the simplest dresses of dark colors and no hats save little black bonnets.

Running through most of the articles of prohibition relating to tobacco, intoxicating beverages, and dress, there has usually been found the reference to their extravagance. Previously it has been shown that the ministers of the church were very poor, and so were also the vast majority of the laymen, although through their frugal habits both laity and clergy lived very happily. Despite their limited means, both clergy and laity alike were generous in their gifts for missions and for all the purposes of their beloved denomination. It was not an unusual matter, for example, to discover at the end of the day of the dedication of a new church building that it had been fully paid for.

The frugality and generosity of Bishop Seybert are as much of an enigma as the man himself. Time upon time he walked long distances because it was too expensive to keep his horse in the larger cities. In 1835 he left his horse at Waterford, New Jersey, and walked twenty-eight miles to Philadelphia, and preached that night. The following day he visited many families and walked back to Waterford, although the weather was very unpleasant and the roads very muddy . . . all this effort to save the expense of keeping a horse in Philadelphia one day.<sup>82</sup> In 1839 on his visit to Canada he left his horse in Seneca County, New York, and travelled three hundred miles by foot, by canal boat, and one day by carriage with a man who offered him a ride. His itemized bill for the trip totaled \$2.83½ of which \$2.56½ was expended for canal boat and fare and 27 cents for his meals, 15 cents going and 12 cents returning.<sup>83</sup> And yet on another occasion he hesitated not a moment to risk a substantial sum to save the home of a widow. The widow's property was about to be sold by the sheriff when Seybert arrived, learned the details, bought the property and ordered it deeded back to the widow. She asked permission to repay him but he did not insist. On the contrary he told the widow:

"I want you to lead a pious, godly life now, avoid luxury, extravagance and every evil forbidden in the Word of God, and if you think you can pay me back in small annual installments, all right. . . and if you can't, it's all right anyhow."<sup>84</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Spreng, S. P., *Life of Seybert*, p. 157.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 217.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121f.

In due time he received every penny of this investment; but this was not always the case, for unscrupulous persons were bound to take advantage of so generous a spirit. It is known that during thirty-six years he had loaned considerable sums of money to needy persons under similar circumstances, \$4,582.50 of which were never returned to him.<sup>85</sup>

That the members of the Evangelical Association were generous in the light of their comparatively meager incomes is shown by the number of institutions they maintained. By maintaining this spirit of generosity, the Evangelical Church has kept in the very forefront of the Christian denominations in this country in the amount of money given per member to all purposes. Among the causes which received the liberal support of the church in this period, the missionary society was favored above all. It remained for the benevolent and educational institutions to receive their major contributions in a later period. So indeed the members of this church strove to carry out the injunction of the earliest book of rules to "be kind and charitable unto all, without exception."<sup>86</sup>

Since the complexities of modern life had not entered the homes of this period and since broken homes and consequent evils were not often found within the circles of the churches of those days, there are no specific rules regarding divorce given in the earlier editions of the *Discipline*. The very first issues, however, carried a paragraph on marriage in which the young people were particularly warned not to marry unconverted persons and should anyone disregard this warning, they were to be placed on probation for six months. They further exhorted all fellow-members who desired "to enter the bonds of holy matrimony, that they pray God earnestly for his blessing, and ask good advice of some faithful friends, before they take the step in so weighty a matter."<sup>87</sup> In the section of General Rules for members was found this pertinent rule:

"To avoid adultery and fornication, and all manner of such like lewdness, especially that trivial and impudent familiarity of males and females, regardless of modesty and good breeding. Also to avoid all manner of evil and trivial deportment and talebearing, that may cause dissension or separation between man and wife."<sup>88</sup>

Similarly frank and strict rules have been reprinted with the new editions of the *Discipline* through the years.

## 56. THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM

The Evangelical Association was begun in order that the gospel might be preached in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia among the

<sup>85</sup> YH(11), p. 97.

<sup>86</sup> *Discipline*, 1809, p. 25; 1817, p. 23.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 1817, p. 28f.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 1832, p. 23, also 1809, p. 25 and 1817, p. 23.



German people who were not receiving satisfactory religious direction and guidance. Many of these German people had come, not as paupers, but as courageous families who for conscience sake and the betterment of their condition had sold their possessions in their fatherland and had decided to try the adventure of building their homes in a new land. Since the Methodists, who taught almost exactly the same type of Christian message, until 1838, limited their efforts to English speaking people, the early fathers of the Evangelical Association determined to minister particularly to the German people, even to the exclusion of the English.

Before 1830, a number of ministers had been received into the denomination who used only the English language and were consequently limited in the number of the fields they were able to serve. The very unfortunate affair with the Rev. John Hamilton and his English associates in 1830 led the general conference in that year to rule that only such preachers would be received into the denomination who had some knowledge of the German language.

The English preachers, many of whom were very capable, became much discouraged and those who did not secede with the Rev. John Hamilton, scattered elsewhere so that by 1831 the English work among Evangelicals had been almost entirely discontinued. In this respect the next decade was the dark period of the church. New settlements were constantly being made in the newly developed sections of the country but the language used was almost universally English. Even the children in the homes of the German members of the church came to prefer the English language, but still the officials insisted on maintaining only German services. Through this failure to properly sense the trend of the times and the needs of their younger people especially, hundreds of members, young and old, were lost to the denomination and vast areas of the newly settled sections of our country were not open to the Evangelical Association.

The Rev. John Seybert, who four years later was elected a bishop of the church, was one of the leaders of the movement to exclude the English work from the denomination. He was able to speak English only with difficulty. Quite a discussion ensued at the General Conference of 1835 when it was decided to establish Sunday Schools throughout the church. Seybert led the group who finally succeeded in having the rule read that "German" Sunday Schools be established in the church. Seybert's diary under these dates bears his sentiment in the matter:

"The English speaking people were already amply provided for in this particular, by other churches. The Germans are in special need. Our church should work among them, and for their benefit. If the Evangelical Association does not help the Germans in the United States, nobody else will. God has commissioned the ministry of the Evan-

gical Association for the very purpose of bringing the Gospel with its light and life to the neglected German population of this country.”<sup>89</sup>

In time the problem of securing German teachers for the Sunday Schools became so serious that English teachers were employed in numerous instances, during this period, and entire Sunday Schools were conducted in the English language. The word “German” before “Sunday Schools” used by the General Conference of 1835, was finally rescinded, because it was misleading; some persons had interpreted it to mean that English Schools were not permitted. As a matter of fact many of the schools in the West continued to use the German language exclusively for several generations and as late as the turn of our century persons still attended these Sunday Schools to learn to speak the German language.<sup>90</sup>

By 1843, the Evangelical Church was convinced that it no longer could afford to throttle the natural growth of the denomination among English speaking people and by action of the general conference of that year decided to give more attention to this increasing group, planned to publish an English paper as soon as practicable, established a rule permitting the organization of English conferences, and ordered the enlarging of the English hymnal. While there was no intention to slight the German work there was in these actions a strong determination to begin working earnestly among the English. The few English preachers were encouraged and, although the beginning was delayed with tremendous loss of numbers and prestige, the English work of the Church soon proved to be the most promising.

By comparison it is interesting to see that the Methodists, who had begun their work among the German people as late as 1838, had increased their German membership from 24 to 2,000 by 1843 at which time they had 24 ministers preaching German exclusively. By 1892 their German membership had risen to 70,000.

## 57. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Since the membership of the Evangelical Association increased about sixfold in the period from 1830 to 1850 it is needless to say that rapid expansion must have taken place on every frontier and in every conference. It will therefore not be possible to chronicle all the signs of growth and development but of necessity only those points of interest can be selected which are of most striking nature or of particular general interest.

### a. The Illinois Conference<sup>90a</sup>

When the Evangelicals of Warren, Pennsylvania, were making their plans to move to Illinois in 1836 their young pastor, the Rev. Jacob

<sup>89</sup> Spreng, S. P., *Life of Seybert*, p. 151.

<sup>90</sup> *AL*, pps. 34, 37, 79, 89.

<sup>90a</sup> Cf. Schwab, John G. and Thoren, H. H., *History of the Illinois Conference of the Evangelical Church, 1837-1937*, Harrisburg, Pa., 325 pp.

Boas, then in his twenty-first year, promised to visit them and to seek to establish an Evangelical Church in the vicinity of their new homes. Boas, who had entered the ministry in 1833, was assigned to the Miami Circuit in Ohio in 1837 apparently so that he could keep his promise to his former parishioners. His presiding elder, the Rev. Henry Niebel, urged him to take some time for the journey to Illinois and accordingly, in the heat of July, Boas set out for the West. Suffering from intense heat and voracious attacks of gnats throughout most of the distance, Boas finally arrived on July 23d in Chicago, which at that time numbered about four thousand inhabitants. He spent that day visiting the Evangelicals in that city. The following day he travelled westward to the home of Daniel Stanger, the leader of the Warren emigrants, where on July 25th he conducted the first Evangelical service in Illinois. In the latter part of September, Boas returned to Illinois once more, despite the difficulties in travel which he had encountered on the previous visit. On this trip he conducted the first quarterly conference in that state under an oak tree on the banks of the Des Plaines River near Wheeling, which was the first official recognition of the several classes then existing in Illinois. In March, 1838, they were constituted into the first charge in that state. These adventuresome westward excursions on the part of the Rev. Jacob Boas are indeed comparable to the similar pioneering mission of the Rev. Adam Hennig in Ohio and had quite the same influence upon the early establishment of the Evangelical Association in Illinois.

In 1838 this charge in Illinois was deprived of the services of a minister for about eight months but they continued regularly with their class meetings, and when their second preacher, the Rev. Mr. Hauert, arrived the work was growing splendidly. The following year their pastor, the Rev. L. Einsel, was ill most of the term from a severe attack of fever. Before his unfortunate illness, however, he had been enabled to dedicate the first church building in the far West on June 20, 1839. By 1840 the work was very well established in the city of Chicago which already in those days was counted the key city to the West. From 1841 until their first church building was erected, the Evangelical preachers in Chicago regularly conducted services in a large room in the city hall, which was then located at the corner of Clark and Randolph Streets.

At its first session in 1840, the Ohio Conference sent a missionary to Illinois and three and a half years later this region was formed into the fourth of the Evangelical conferences. They, too, caught the missionary spirit very early, for when the Rev. Mr. Lutz was sent as an assistant pastor to the Rev. Einsel in 1839, he made the first missionary trip to Wisconsin. He preached in Milwaukee and was very kindly received by the German people there. In May, 1840, Lutz was appointed



to Illinois and served also as missionary to Wisconsin. By 1841, a class was organized in Milwaukee and the Rev. Mr. Stroh, then pastor, added it to the Illinois Circuit. In May, 1844, the Illinois Conference was organized, covering large portions of Indiana and Illinois and extending as far as Wisconsin and Iowa, being about five hundred miles long and four hundred miles wide. There were then 14 preachers, 763 members, 3 circuits, 6 missions, 5 churches, 5 Sunday Schools and about 50 preaching places, some of which were sixty to eighty miles apart and almost inaccessible, due to swamps and unbridged rivers. Two years later the membership had increased to 1208.

### b. Growth in New York and the West

Although Lake Circuit in New York was always considered as a kind of last resort appointment among the ministers in the early years, under the leadership of the Revs. G. Schneider and J. Campbell in 1831 one hundred and sixty members were received there. Two years later the Buffalo Circuit was organized and soon four preachers were stationed in this growing Evangelical center where just a short time before only one had been necessary. In 1833 the Charitable Society loaned three hundred dollars to the Rochester congregation to build a church, and the very next year a mission was begun in Syracuse. By 1848 the New York Conference was organized as the fifth in the denomination.

While the church was growing in the East and in New York, the Western Conference in Ohio began a mission among the Alsatians in Wayne County in 1837 from which have come a number of prominent Evangelical families including the Sprengs. In this same year the congregation in Philadelphia received one hundred new members and were so successful that they erected their first building which was dedicated October 1, 1837. During 1838, the Rev. Solomon Altimos, who had been received as a minister by the Eastern Conference five years before, moved to Monroe County, Michigan. Although he was an invalid and without any appointment or official sanction, he preached<sup>90b</sup> often in Adams, Wells, and Allen Counties and also in Detroit and Fort Wayne, Indiana. His first class was organized in December that year on Port Creek in Michigan. Although he died two and a half years later, Altimos had laid the foundation for the future work in Michigan and Northern Indiana.

### c. Lebanon, Pennsylvania

While numerous members of the Evangelical Association, for some time previously, had lived in what is now Lebanon County, the actual beginning of the work of the church in the city of Lebanon dates to

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<sup>90b</sup> Watson, William H., *History of the Michigan Conference of the Evangelical Church*, 1838-1940, Harrisburg, Pa., 1942, pp. 1-10.

1826. Between 1824 and 1826 the Rev. Philip Breitenstein and his son John, and the Rev. Felix Licht, a Mennonite preacher, had won numerous converts who were, however, averse to the formation of a separate organization. When John Seybert was the presiding elder of the district in 1826 he was successful in organizing the first class there and by 1830 the first church building was erected, which was dedicated on September 26th of that year by the Rev. Henry Niebel. Two years later under the leadership of their pastors, the Revs. Jacob Schnerr and J. P. Leib, the first Sunday School in the denomination was founded there. Apparently the work continued to grow very rapidly, when once properly organized, for by 1835 the Eastern Conference held its annual sessions in that church.

The first mission was located in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1843, and from this late beginning has grown a very strong denominational center.

#### d. Allentown, Pennsylvania

Although Allentown has come to be one of the very strongest Evangelical centers in the East, it was not until 1831 that the first preaching place in this vicinity was discovered at the home of Brigadier General Henry Mertz in the Cedar Creek Valley, Lehigh County. The Rev. John Dreisbach was the first of the Evangelical preachers to preach in the city of Allentown at the home of Mr. Kaiser, a German druggist. During one of these services, four men, from the group of scoffing Germans of other faiths who made the work in this community so difficult, actually shook the entire Kaiser home by ramming against its side a log so large that it required four men to carry it. Later in 1835 the Revs. Joseph M. Saylor and Jacob Riegel also preached there. A colored man by the name of James Grove opened his home as a preaching place in Allentown when others apparently considered it unsafe to do so. Because of such dreadful opposition the work developed slowly.

Despite the opposition of General Mertz's Lutheran pastor, the family continued to permit the Evangelical preachers to use this home as a preaching place and ultimately on his land erected the first Evangelical church in Lehigh County in 1835. On one of his visits to Allentown in 1835, the Rev. Joseph Saylor was violently opposed by a Rev. Mr. Deering on the question of sin in the lives of Christian people. It was arranged that he and Saylor should each have an opportunity to preach a sermon on the subject in the Court House in Allentown four weeks later. The week before the sermon contest, Deering announced that he would not appear. But permission was granted to Joseph Saylor to preach his sermon, the effect of which was a tremendous increase of prestige for the small struggling group of Evangelicals. The work has since spread from this point through Lehigh and the neighboring coun-

ties and the Evangelical church in all this territory is highly regarded among all denominations.

On October 10, 1837, the Revs. John Seybert and Solomon Altimos preached in the public market place, the only place which could be secured for these services. Within the next year the first class was organized in March, 1838, and by November 26, 1838, the first church building in the city was dedicated.

#### e. Baltimore, Maryland

The adventuresome Jacob Boas was appointed the first missionary to Baltimore in 1840 when he had but two members upon whom he could depend as a nucleus from which to build a congregation. During the second quarter a few more friends were added, but several months later the services were crowded and many conversions took place. During the first year about forty influential members of the Otterbein United Brethren church joined the group and by the end of his second year Boas reported two hundred and fifteen members. From a private home the small congregation moved into a chapel rented from the Methodists, then into another small church thirty by thirty-five feet which they had purchased. In March, 1841, a lot was purchased on Camden Street and a new building dedicated there on December 12th of that year. Just ten years later the church was destroyed by fire. Before they could rebuild they accepted an offer of \$9,000 for their property from a railroad company and built a new church on Green Street. This became the nucleus for the work in Eastern Maryland.

#### f. Cleveland, Ohio

The Evangelical Association in Cleveland was begun as late as 1840 by the Rev. A. Stroh. Feeling a desire to open a work there, he visited the city and by his plain dress was recognized as an Evangelical preacher by some members of the Schnuerer family who had moved there from Buffalo, a short time before. Their home became a regular preaching place and by August, 1841, the small group was ready to dedicate a little church. In the fall of 1845, this church building twenty-eight by thirty-eight feet was moved about a mile to the corner of Eagle and Erie Streets where the congregation increased and a Sunday School was established about the same time. While the society grew slowly at first, the work in this city prospered a great deal after the publishing house and denominational headquarters were moved thither in 1854. For seventy-five years it was generally considered the first Evangelical city in the country.

#### g. Reading, Pennsylvania

Since Reading and Berks County were strongholds of the German Lutheran and Reformed Churches there was very much opposition to



the work of the Evangelicals and their kind. However as early as 1827 the work was begun in Womelsdorf in the Western end of the county and the Rev. John Seybert preached in Reading in 1828 where he indicated the work had already attained some proportions. Reading Circuit was formed out of the Eastern end of the old Lebanon Circuit in 1835, but the first mission in the city of Reading was established as late as 1844 when the Rev. Joseph Saylor was sent as the pastor. After conducting services in a room above a tannery and finally in his own home, the Rev. Saylor found a friend in Dr. Nagle and by 1845 had erected the first church building there. The work grew very rapidly for in 1849 the congregation was large enough to entertain the East Pennsylvania Conference. It is said that a great revival occurred there in 1852 but by 1853 many had fallen away from the faith.

A very interesting glimpse at the work of the Evangelicals in this period is found in a contemporary diary of Dr. Ernest M. Adam,<sup>91</sup> who was born in Germany, November 20, 1801. After taking his medical degree from the University of Leipzig, Dr. Adam came to America and travelled very widely. Sometime before 1845 (when the first church was erected in Reading) and probably after 1840, Dr. Adam visited Reading and included in his diary the following vivid and not very sympathetic description of an Evangelical service conducted by Bishop John Seybert in the home of one of the members in that city:

"I had been in America about three weeks before I had attended a house of worship, merely because I lacked the desire to go. As I came to Reading I found at the hotel several jolly Germans. They smoked, drank and sang. One of them approached me in a good humor and asked me whether I expected to remain for the night, to which I replied in the affirmative. He said that if I intended to do this I would be able to experience a joke as probably never before for the . . . (probably Strabler) will meet at a certain time and you may expect to see and hear things that will surpass your imagination. If it is agreeable to you I will meet you. As it began to grow dusk, to my surprise the jolly man came for me and I accompanied him. I heard for the first time the name "Strabler" and thought it might mean actors, tight rope walkers, merry makers, or gypsies. At an unpretentious house he stopped and we entered. As soon as the door opened a pleasant featured man met us, took us by the hand and showed us a seat. At my side stood a small table and a chair back of it. Just opposite me was a locked door and the room was filled with benches on which people with joyous faces sat and who occasionally gave vent to their feelings in tones not unlike deep sighs. The reason for this I could not fathom. So much I now realized that this could not possibly be a place of merry makers, jesters, or gypsies. The large book on the table had all the appearance of a Bible, a book for which I cared little at that time.

<sup>91</sup> English translation of Dr. Adam's Diary (in manuscript) by Prof. L. J. Ulmer of the Lock Haven State Teachers' College, Lock Haven, Pennsylvania.

The chamber door opened just enough for a man to come forth. He immediately locked the door again and seated himself among the people. Though this was but the work of a moment, yet my eyes got a glimpse through the open door into the chamber. The chamber was lighted by a large lamp and a man lay on his knees as though he were in earnest prayer. This glance gave me a good impression since I comprehended that this man could not possibly be a hypocrite. Since he was in silent prayer, I thought it must come from the heart, and not merely from the lips.

"Soon after this they sang a hymn with such a joyous tune as though it were a secular piece of music, that it appeared as a contradiction to the praying man, as at the close of the hymn the said praying man came from the chamber to the table. His coat had a very peculiar cut and seemed in general not to have been made for him, since when he stretched forth his hands as though he intended to bless them, the short sleeves sprang back to the elbows and the shirt showed. This aroused laughter in me, much more since I had never seen a preacher before on the pulpit except clothed in the manner of his profession. My laughter was at once subdued, through a fearful roar, cry, laughter, and "bawling." The voices of dogs and cats were imitated as the windows toward the street were open.

"I saw a host of persons standing outside as soon as quiet was restored. The preacher turning his face toward the window, said, 'I believed I had come to a Christian Lutheran community. It seems, however, that I have come to Sodom and Gomorrah. Surely you are all Evangelical Lutheran church members, baptized, confirmed, and having taken of the sacrament in your denomination. Now if you are true Christians or, at least, if you desire to become one, then I invite you to come in to us. We are also true believers in the crucified Savior. Come in, there is room enough for you all, that we may together praise and glorify the name of the most high Savior.'

"A silence fell over the place as after a storm outside. The enemy had shamefully shrunk away. Now the preacher began his discourse by reading a text and pictured the natural state of man in such true colors that it seemed to me as though he had seen my innermost heart. I felt stunned as once David when Nathan said, 'You are the man.' My consciousness of my heart was at once interrupted through a never before seen example. With a loud cry a woman sprang from her seat, clapped her hands and shouted, 'Glory, Hallelujah.' Her jumps became higher and higher. Several women surrounded her and balanced her when she threatened to fall over. They took the combs from her hair which fell in disorder over her face, breast and shoulders. She threw her head backward so violently that it seemed as though her neck was broken. Finally she became drunk (fainted) and sank stiff and unconscious into the arms of the women. They carried her into the chamber as though she were a corpse. Undisturbed the preacher continued without concerning himself about the woman. For myself, I could not discern a word said, since the shrieking and jumping woman occupied all of my attention.

"After singing a hymn, the meeting closed and indeed I had seen and heard things as never before. I inquired about the name of the preacher and discovered that his name was Seybert, and later became convinced that he was a man after God's own will, a true and unwearyed worker in the divine word of the Lord, till death called him to a higher station."

Dr. Adam's second contact with the Evangelical Church occurred in New Berlin, Pa. He never came fully to understand the Evangelicals, but since his descriptions are those of an eye witness they are included. He wrote:

"I had one day heard that preacher Seybert in his journey through the town would speak at the evening meeting. The meeting place was a schoolhouse. I felt a desire to hear and see again the man that I had earlier in the aforesaid chamber seen on his knees, praying in secret.

"As I entered I found the place well filled with people. The preacher himself was not yet present. Finally he came, arrayed in a travelling coat. He had just dismounted from his horse. He greeted the people in a friendly fashion and took his station where a new and costly arm chair stood. He opened his overcoat, removed it and laid it over the back of a chair. Suddenly he grasped the coat again with great haste as though the chair might be aflame, in such a way as to attract general attention. He threw the coat over his arm and paced from one side to the other looking for another place to hang his coat, but since he was unable to find one he threw his coat under the table.

"He now stepped to the chair and examined it from the front and rear, and then pushed it with a sigh into the farthest corner. The good man had taken a dislike to costly furniture. Had it been a bench or an old chair it would not have been discarded for he must have been weary from the journey. This occasion may have been the cause for the selection of his text. Before this happened, however, his mouth disclosed what was secreted in his heart. He cast his eyes toward the audience and swept them back and forth. Finally his eyes fastened on the front benches on which fine looking girls with especially high hair dressing were seated. He raised his arms and pointed toward the girls and asked in a loud voice of an elder, 'Do these also belong to our sect?' The answer was in the affirmative. Immediately he opened the Bible and read the following text, 'Likewise shall also the women in proper appearance and modest et cetera.' (Probably 1 Peter 3: 1-5.)

"Scarcely had he started with the explanation of this text when there were manifestations of the effect. One of the girls jumped up crying loudly with a broken voice, tore the comb from her hair, threw it on the floor and tramped on it with her feet. A second and a third followed her example and the dear man stood with raised hands praising God for his manifestation of his power. Since then much simplicity has disappeared from Christian people. The manner of fashion has so manifested itself that there is no distinction between the church members and the worldly people. Israel has become like the Philistines and the world."



Since the descriptions by Dr. Adam are so vivid and from the point of view of an unbiased though not an understanding onlooker, the third and last of his contacts with the Evangelicals is also included here:

"My third and last contact with the Albright people happened at a so-called camp meeting. I had previously heard much as to what would likely happen at the event. I convinced myself therefore by becoming an eyewitness of the occasion.

"The camp ground was located in a lonely grove. As I approached I heard a great uproar, not unlike that of a military camp. On arriving at the place I found a vast number of people, whom curiosity or probably the free hospitality had lured to the place. I could not conceive how among such display of finery a God-seeking soul might be found. I noticed a long platform on which at least ten preachers were stationed, before the platform a long bench stood which had been named the mourners' bench, or bench of grace. The remaining benches were for the hearers. There were also many tents and huts erected from which the pleasant odor of coffee, roast beef, and other good things emanated.

"The devotional service had begun before my arrival. One preacher pictured in the most vivid colors the unspeakable torments which all unbelievers and unconverted would have to endure in hell and the lake of fire. No one could deny that the man had an excellent lung capacity, for his voice echoed like a trumpet in the far distance. The message also made an impression on his hearers, for there soon arose an indescribable moaning and sobbing. The speaker continually wiped the sweat from his brow, laboring with might and main until his voice could endure the strain no longer, whereupon he retired and another preacher took his place and took up the thread of the discourse anew. He, however, led his hearers in an entirely different direction, namely; not to hell with its torments of fire, but he endeavored to remove the veil that hides from us mortals the gates of paradise. He sought to bring the joys of eternity which await every regenerate soul into our spiritual vision. 'Today is the day of grace, come ye for all things are ready,' and as he spoke he often pointed to the mourners' bench. The excitement soon rose to its highest pitch, screaming women and shouting men appeared here and there and the mourners' bench did not long remain vacant, each was surrounded by ministers and was refreshed by spiritual consolation. Suddenly there resounded the blast of a small horn. This little horn had a magic influence in itself for at once silence reigned. Each then arose from his seat and hurried to one or another of the tents for it was dinner time and the horn had called attention to the fact that man is not merely a spirit but also possesses a material body whose aroused hunger was not to be satisfied with mere words. I left the camp ground and have never again felt the desire to hear the magic sound of that horn that destroyed the terrors of hell and the glories with lightning rapidity."

These camp meetings, which were conducted widely throughout the Evangelical denomination during this period just as in the previous

years, served their purposes best during those times when church buildings were few and widely scattered and also so small that very large gatherings could not be held in them. With the erection of more numerous and more spacious buildings quarterly services were sometimes continued for three days and evangelistic services were sometimes conducted over an entire circuit with a service in a different church each night. The credit for originating the so-called "protracted" meetings belongs to the Rev. Jacob Boas who, during the month of May, 1836, conducted a series of evangelistic services for eight days near Brighton on Conneaut Lake on Erie Circuit. During 1835 the Rev. John Seybert had conducted a five day meeting in Philadelphia. Thereafter many pastors adopted this innovation although a number of men hesitated to use them because they frequently caused "spiritual droughts" on the remaining portion of the circuits and after the close of such meetings, even in the very church where the services were held. Perhaps the strongest argument against them was the fact that they allowed the zeal for the salvation of others to be too largely confined to the period of special services. However these protracted meetings and the camp meetings remained particularly popular in the Evangelical Association even into this century, quite a great deal longer than in many other denominations which sponsored them. In the more recent years other methods have been combined with these although in many portions of the denomination such meetings are still used pretty largely to the exclusion of the newer types.

During the years 1842 to 1844 there were extraordinary religious revivals in many of the denominations in America. One of the reasons, no doubt, was the terrible financial stress which caused many bankruptcies and much unemployment. Through the lack of material interests, many turned their minds to the reality of religion where they could still seek and find satisfaction for their hearts and minds. Another reason for these spiritual revivals was the prophecy of a Baptist preacher, Mr. Miller, who predicted that the second coming of Christ and the end of the world would occur in the near future. This appeal to fear led many otherwise uninterested persons to give serious thought to religion. On the contrary when his predicted date passed without the promised cataclysm many hundreds of religious persons, once scared into a superficial repentance, suddenly lost all their religion again. The remarkable success in all types of services and the wider expansion of the Evangelical Association must be accounted for partly by the fact that the church had been newly organized by the General Conference of 1839 and that the active supervision of a bishop was introduced at that session.

During the very last years preceding 1850 the membership of the church grew very slowly, so that the net annual gains at times were only

one hundred or even less, while the total number of conversions and accessions for these years sometimes were as high as 2300.

While the leaders of the church still insisted on strict supervision of clergy and laity, they realized that it was not possible to sustain such enormous losses simply through irregularities of their members. W. W. Orwig who lived through the period wrote:

" . . . the want of proper treatment of the awakened and newly converted persons is the principal cause of these losses, viz., neglect of regular family visits, want of personal acquaintance with every member of the church, of familiar conversation with the members generally on the subject of religion, and the great neglect of class-meetings by both preachers and class leaders. . . . At this time the first zeal for the cause of missions had considerably cooled in many places."<sup>92</sup>

Despite the losses, however, the denomination had grown by the General Conference of 1851 to include 21,179 members, 195 travelling preachers and 185 local preachers. While the revivals and protracted and camp meetings had not been original with the Evangelicals but had been used and adequately proven by the Methodists and Baptists, they nevertheless came to be very useful instruments and peculiarly helpful in the development of the genius of the Evangelical Association during the period from 1830 to 1850.

#### **h. Building and Church Architecture**

The 1840's were the period during which church buildings came to be erected in large numbers throughout the entire denomination. The West shared alike with the East in this distinction. In fact buildings were erected in Naperville and Chicago, Illinois, and one was begun in Wisconsin in 1843 while the first church building in Reading, Pennsylvania, was not erected until 1844. Even missions ventured into the building project and on several occasions such weaker congregations obtained loans from the Charitable Society when they were able to give good security. Occasionally indiscretion led congregations to build first and count the costs afterward. Invariably such carelessness resulted in expending more than was wise and created a burden of debt which for sometime afterward hindered the work and progress of the congregations involved.

A few of the leaders of the church began to be somewhat disturbed after 1840 when more and more elaborate churches were erected, fearing that the fundamental principle of humility for which the small denomination had stood was at stake. The first church with a tower and bell, for example, was erected at Millheim, Pennsylvania, in 1842, and dedicated in February, 1843, by Bishop John Seybert. This was a

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<sup>92</sup> OH, p. 393f.



marked departure from the simple meeting house type of church which had previously been the norm for the denomination. Such plain buildings they had probably copied somewhat from the Mennonites, many of whom still build their churches along very simple and plain lines.

Expressing his sadness at the departure from the old standards, but also giving the best extant description of the churches of the earliest days, W. W. Orwig wrote:

"Our first churches were small, low and plain, for the most part in remote corners, especially in towns, either on account of poverty of the members, or out of humility, the sincerity of which we would not question. The costs were generally from \$300 to \$500, and in some instances a little more. One story, 12 or 15 feet high, an aisle through the middle, seats on both sides, a porportionately high pulpit, on one of the sides, no altar—this was the general style of our first churches. Those built in the next period (in the 1830's) were somewhat larger, generally 30 by 40 or 40 by 45, a little higher, the pulpit lower, frequently two instead of one aisle, generally with an altar, which cost from six to seven hundred dollars, sometimes \$1,000. Of this kind there are still some built in our days, especially in the country, and they also answer their purpose. At this time (after 1840) our people commenced to erect larger buildings, in some places of two stories, especially in the towns, the costs varying from \$1,500 to \$3,000, in the large cities from \$6,000 to \$7,000, without the lot. There was, thanks be to God, no occasion till then for complaining of extravagance in the erection of churches in the Evangelical Association, and, as far as the writer knows, there is no such occasion yet, except that by mismanagement more money is often spent than is necessary." <sup>93</sup>

Since he was constantly called upon to dedicate church buildings, Bishop John Seybert was in a position to know the various kinds of buildings being erected in the denomination, and he also had some pronounced convictions in the matter. In a letter to the Rev. Philip Schnatz, among other things he wrote:

"I have decided on my own initiative to send you one of the best church plans in the country, so that you may know, how churches should be designed, for most churches are bungled (alles verpfuscht)." <sup>94</sup>

Then in his own hand he drew a church plan with two aisles and an additional dividing partition through the center, to the left of which were the seats for the men and boys and to the right the seats for the women and girls. The pulpit in the front center was slightly raised and on either side of it were the "Amen corners" with the pews running perpendicular to the others in the building. About half way back, between the aisles and the side walls, was an open space on each side of

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<sup>93</sup> *OH*, p. 335.

<sup>94</sup> Letter in the collection of the Historical Society.

the room, surrounded on three sides by pews and in the center of which were the inevitable cannon stoves. These were the only means of heating the building. There were two doors at the front of the church, one being at the entrance to each aisle. This was Bishop Seybert's conception of a desirable church building; and that his wishes were often followed is shown by the fact that in numerous places just such buildings are still to be found.

The next type of building which came to be quite common toward the close of the nineteenth century was the very high two story building with the first floor given over to the Sunday School and other organizations of the church while the second floor was almost exclusively reserved for worship. Shortly after the turn to the twentieth century the Akron plan, with folding or sliding doors to the one side or rear opening into a Sunday School room with balcony, became the vogue. In the more recent years, most of the buildings have taken a modified gothic form and most of the annual conferences have adopted rules which require the submission of all church plans to a competent building committee. In these cases the approval of this committee is required before the building is begun.

Throughout all the agencies formed during this period from 1830 to 1850, and through all the various types of services from camp meetings to the simple worship of the class under the leadership of the class leader and the exhorter, there was invariably to be found a warm and close relationship among all of the members and especially the clergy, very similar to the relationships in a large family. The annual and general conferences were still the very hub from which most of the new and progressive movements emanated and in which the spirit and genius of the church was perpetuated. No finer way to close this interesting period suggests itself than to see the members of an annual conference closing its sessions in a deeply spiritual atmosphere and with tremendous mutual concern among the ministers. Their saddle bags had been packed and a few moments later the ministers were to be riding on their way to their new appointments. The Illinois Conference was bringing its sessions to such a close in June 1849, the appointments had been read, and just above the signatures of approval of all the ministers, the secretary of that conference wrote:

"Deeply moved we gave each other the parting hand; united in spirit to live or die in the cause of the Lord each one hastened to his appointment."<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Quoted in *YH* (1), p. 394.

## CHAPTER VII

### GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE THIRD QUARTER CENTURY, 1850-1875

#### 58. A JUBILEE YEAR

With the dawn of the year 1850 the Evangelical Association called her membership to the celebration of a year of jubilee—it was just half a century since the days when Jacob Albright had formed the first classes of the denomination. The editors of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and *The Evangelical Messenger* published editorials on the subject on the first and eighth of January, respectively, advocating a church-wide revival, the extension of the work of the church, a day of prayer and thanksgiving, and even the founding of a foreign mission, as appropriate ways of celebrating such a jubilee year. All the annual conferences passed almost identical resolutions planning a church wide support for home and foreign missions, the liquidation of local and conference debts, the observance of a day of prayer and also the erection of a memorial church at the grave of Jacob Albright.

#### The Albright Church

The East Pennsylvania Conference in session in February, 1850, resolved to erect a memorial church at Kleinfeltersville, near the grave of Jacob Albright and designated,

"That the said church shall be called the Albright Church, erected in the fiftieth year of the Evangelical Association in memory of the sainted Jacob Albright, founder of the Evangelical Association of North America."<sup>1</sup>

The West Pennsylvania Conference supported this action and set apart the sum of \$1,000 for the project. The other conferences likewise contributed funds so that on October 13th the church could be dedicated. The Rev. J. P. Leib officiated. The building was constructed of stone, thirty-eight feet wide, fifty-two feet long, and two stories in height.

The pledges had not all been paid by the next session of the East Pennsylvania Conference, and the builder, Mr. Thomas Seip, presented a claim of \$2,500 against the Albright Church. The conference authorized the borrowing of \$800 toward this sum, and then set the month of May as the time to make an appeal for a contribution from every member for this building.

Although there is a tradition among some of the older residents in

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<sup>1</sup> *BL*, p. 130.





JACOB ALBRIGHT'S HOME NEAR HINKLETOWN, PA.



ALBRIGHT MEMORIAL CHURCH, KLEINFELTERSVILLE, PA.  
*(Albright's grave is in the cemetery at lower left hand corner of picture)*



Kleinfeltersville, Pennsylvania, that the Albright Church was destroyed by fire about a decade later, it is very probable that it was faulty construction which made necessary the complete rebuilding of this church, as is indicated by the cornerstone. The minutes of the East Pennsylvania Conference clearly state that Seip the builder sustained serious financial loss during the process of construction due to a very heavy rain storm. The fair spirit of these men is indicated by the fact that they paid Mr. Seip \$300 beyond their contract. This unfortunate storm had much to do with the weakening of the stone masonry and accordingly in 1860 the entire structure was razed and rebuilt. The General Conference of 1934 allocated the Kleinfeltersville Church to the Historical Society of the Evangelical Church which during the more recent years has conducted, on the first Sunday in May, an annual memorial service in the church and at the grave of Albright, that day being nearest May 1st which was Albright's birthday.

The bishops John Seybert and Joseph Long set the Thursday after the dedication of the Albright Church, October 17, 1850, as the day of prayer and thanksgiving, for as nearly as could be determined, it was on that day, just fifty-four years before, that Jacob Albright had set out from his home to preach the gospel.

During this Year of Jubilee, the West Pennsylvania Conference adopted a resolution to establish an institution of learning and, in conjunction with the other conferences, coöperated in sending the first missionary to Germany. During 1850 also the first sentiment for a mission among the heathen manifested itself in the church. Jacob Munk, a layman, sent \$10 and a strong article in favor of such a mission, which appeared in *Der Christliche Botschafter*.<sup>2</sup> A similar appeal from the pen of the Rev. Henry Bucks appeared shortly afterward. Near the end of the year a layman offered to be one of twenty men to contribute \$100 each and thereby raise \$2,000 for this worthy project.<sup>3</sup> Despite their zeal and the favorable sentiments expressed at almost all the sessions of the general conference until the end of this period, it was to be another quarter of a century until their dream could be realized.

## 59. THE GENERAL CONFERENCES 1851 TO 1875

The seven quadrennial sessions of the general conference held during this period marked the clarification and refining of the polity and doctrine of the Evangelical Association, from which few deviations have been made. The doctrine of Christian perfection was much discussed and clearly defined and a large body of church law to govern

<sup>2</sup> *CB*, Feb. 1, 1850.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, March 1, 1850 and December 2, 1850.



the future polity of the church was enacted and set forth in an orderly fashion.

#### a. General Conference of 1851

The tenth session of the general conference convened on September 17, 1851, at Flat Rock, Ohio. A goodly number of the delegates and both Bishops Seybert and Long, due to the rapid expansion of the church, felt the need for a provision to transfer preachers from one conference to another. However, the three-fourths majority required by the *Discipline* could not be mustered in support of such a provision even though the suggested transfers were to be made with the consent of the preachers and the presiding elders concerned. In the discussion of the publishing houses in the last chapter mention has already been made of the removal of the publishing plant from New Berlin to Cleveland, Ohio. Other cities considered for this important institution were Philadelphia, Harrisburg and Pittsburgh. Cleveland was selected by a majority of five votes.

The Pittsburgh and the Indiana Conferences were newly formed at this general conference session and became the sixth and seventh conferences of the church. The Rev. John Nicolai was appointed the first missionary to Germany. (For the account of the Evangelical Church in Europe see Chapter XIII.)

There were in the denomination in 1851, 21,175 members and 380 preachers, distributed respectively through the conferences; in East Pennsylvania 4,538 and 38; in West Pennsylvania 6,205 and 57; in New York 2,285 and 20; in Ohio 4,451 and 43; and in Illinois 3,597 and 37. There were at the time twenty-eight home missions and the contributions for the Missionary Society during that time amounted to \$7,480.95½ which was about 36 cents per member.

#### b. General Conference of 1855

Lebanon, Pennsylvania, was the seat of the eleventh session of the general conference which began on September 19, 1855. The rapid growth of the number of members, and particularly of the clergy, made it necessary to change the basis of representation of the annual conferences in the general conference from one delegate to every four preachers to one delegate to every seven preachers.

The work in Wisconsin, established a comparatively short time before as a mission of the Illinois Conference, had developed so rapidly that the Wisconsin Conference was organized as the eighth conference in the church. This action was approved with much enthusiasm by the Illinois Conference at its session in Freeport on April 16, 1856. Illinois was at that time really the pioneer conference of the church and no frontier seemed too difficult for it to face. That a great need challenges to great leadership is clearly shown by the fact that the Illinois Confer-

ence that year had twenty new applicants for reception into the itinerancy, only about half of whom could be absorbed. To carry on their missionary work that year the preachers alone contributed several hundred dollars. Even after the assignments had been read, one minister moved that a missionary be sent to Minnesota. The enthusiastic passage of this action marked the beginning of the work in that large state and the ministers in a special offering contributed more than \$120 for the Minnesota mission.

Sensing a greater need for Christian literature, especially among the children and youth of the church, this general conference established a Tract Society and also *Der Christliche Kinderfreund* (The Christian Children's Friend). The publisher was also instructed to print an English edition of the *History of the Evangelical Association* which was not accomplished until almost the end of the quadrennium.

The Rev. Charles G. Koch, the editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and one of the progressive leaders of the church, informally suggested merging the Evangelical Association with the Wesleyan Methodists and the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. Since the presentation was not in regular form no official action was taken, but the sentiment of the group was clearly expressed that there was ample opportunity for these churches to coöperate with each other without actual union.

This conference on motion of the Rev. W. W. Orwig, an oft proven constructive leader at these general sessions, not only reasserted its convictions concerning the usefulness and advantages of a literary education but also declared itself in favor of educational institutions in the church and wished success to the East and West Pennsylvania and the Ohio Conferences in their ventures in this field. Some of the leaders, including Bishop Seybert himself, occasionally had some misgivings about the other related qualities of an educated ministry. Seybert was always anxious that with their education, the ministers of the church should remain simple in worship, manner, and dress.

Despite the fact that there was a gain of 6,551 members during the quadrennium, the church was entering upon that period in which she was to lose many of her distinguished leaders and thus lose some of her prestige. Henry Fischer and John Spangler had already departed from this life and John Erb and Jacob Wagner were soon to go. Bishop Seybert was perceptibly growing weaker although he was to be spared a few more years.

The interim before the next session of the general conference also introduces one of the most disturbing elements in all the history of the church. On February 9, 1857, the Rev. Solomon Neitz of the East Pennsylvania Conference published a pamphlet of four pages entitled, *Christian Sanctification in Accordance with the Apostolic Doctrine*,

which was to be the basis for lengthy discussions and numerous actions of the annual and general conferences during the next twenty years. A short time later Neitz published a second and enlarged edition in which his positions were clarified and embellished.

The fundamental tenets expressed in this pamphlet as well as in his later sermons and other writings which occasioned further alarm among the conservative leaders of the church were, (1) that all true believers possess sanctification; (2) that the doctrine of entire sanctification is not apostolic; (3) that inbred sin is not entirely taken away but only covered in this life; (4) that sin as a continuous force or potency remains and intrudes itself continually into the life of a Christian, and (5) that sin has its seat in the mortal body and will be destroyed by death.<sup>4</sup>

Without denying the necessity of continuously struggling to maintain a Christian life, Neitz offended many defenders of the Wesleyan teaching of "Sanctification" because he magnified the place of regeneration and minimized the necessity of a conscious stage of Christian perfection to be attained at a specific time afterward. His own conference called Neitz to task, when it met on the last Wednesday in February in 1858, for violating a rule of the general conference that ministers shall not publish books or pamphlets without first submitting them to an examining committee. Apparently it was well recognized that there was no minister in the East Pennsylvania Conference, where Neitz was very popular, who would or who could satisfactorily prefer charges against this author. Accordingly the venerable Francis Hoffman introduced W. W. Orwig, who had been brought from the West Pennsylvania Conference for the purpose, who then proceeded to a systematic refutation of the tenets of Neitz. Despite the alarm which the presiding Bishop Seybert and other conservative leaders felt over this attack on the sacred doctrines of the church, Neitz had comparatively little difficulty in clearing his name before his own conference. He asserted, by way of defense, that he had never intended this disturbance in the church because he felt that his fundamental positions were entirely in harmony with the teaching of his denomination, and also he promised that he would make no more trouble along this line in the future. Few preachers in the entire history of the church have ever possessed such an attractive personality as did Solomon Neitz. Somewhat on the strength of his defense but more largely on account of his magnanimity and attractive personality, Neitz was acquitted by his own conference. The matter, however, was to be the center of many a long discussion

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<sup>4</sup> For a complete English translation of Neitz's pamphlet cf. Schwab, Ralph Kendall, *The History of the Doctrine of Christian Perfection in the Evangelical Association*, 1922, pp. 139ff.



so with this preliminary statement we leave it until further action was taken by the general conference.

During this interim between 1855 and 1859, a new form of intellectual stimulus and theological training for the ministry was adopted. The Ohio Conference in session in Bristol (now Marshalville), on May 13, 1857, on motion of the ever alert Charles G. Koch, recommended annual district meetings for ministers. Their first program, offered near the end of September that year, consisted of thirteen papers prepared and read by various ministers on subjects that fairly well encompassed the entire range of theological and moral topics. Ever since, with more or less regularity, the presiding elders throughout the church have been using this method for one or two annual gatherings of the ministers on their districts. At these gatherings theological and pastoral subjects usually constitute the program.

### c. The General Conference of 1859

An intense interest marked the very opening of the twelfth session of the general conference, when the fifty-two delegates and two bishops gathered in Naperville, Illinois, on October 5, 1859. Immediately after the initial period of worship and the organization of the conference, the examination of the delegates and general officers of the church once more opened the question of the orthodoxy of the Rev. Solomon Neitz. W. W. Orwig preferred charges against the popular East Pennsylvania presiding elder in almost the identical manner which he had used before Neitz's own conference the year before. Since that session of the East Pennsylvania Conference, Neitz had written a short article for *Der Christliche Botschafter* in which he had maintained practically the same positions as those previously printed in his two pamphlets. Orwig reasoned that the East Pennsylvania Conference had not had opportunity to press charges since this article had appeared and, therefore, he was justified in charging Neitz before the general conference to which he was amenable. The presiding bishop, Joseph Long, ruled that the charge was in order and Orwig accordingly presented a very long historical argument consuming almost the entire morning session on Thursday, October 6th. In the afternoon, Neitz replied and after a free discussion, it was

"Resolved, That this conference considers the doctrine of Brother S. Neitz on the subject of Christian holiness, as published by him in two tracts, and recently repeated in the *Christliche Botschafter*, as conflicting with the doctrine of the Evangelical Association, on Christian holiness, contained in her book of Discipline."<sup>5</sup>

The seven delegates of the East Pennsylvania Conference remained neutral and did not vote on this matter for they found it difficult to

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<sup>5</sup> GCJ, 1859, p. 15.

vote contrary to the previous action of their own conference which had stated that it was satisfied with Neitz's defense of his position in 1858. The resolution was adopted by forty-four votes of the general conference, seven delegates not voting. In presenting his charges, Orwig stated repeatedly that he desired that no punishment should be meted out to Neitz, whom he recognized as a great power, not only in his own conference but as well throughout the church. The official printed minutes of this session of the general conference, the first such printed record, show no indication that Neitz was in any way reprimanded. On the contrary this body elected him as a member of the newly created Board of Publication and entrusted to him the very great responsibility of revising and enlarging a *Historical Catechism*.<sup>6</sup>

Moving more and more toward a centralized and delegated form of government, this body created two new general boards, a Board of Missions and a Board of Publication, each of which was to transact the business pertaining to its respective field in the interim of the sessions of the general conference, to which body it was amenable. The Board of Missions was to consist of the officers of the society and one delegate from each conference missionary society. The Board of Publication was composed of seven members elected for a term of four years by the general conference itself. It was also decided that a corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society should be elected to give full time to the work of creating interest in missions and securing increased support for this great cause. The Rev. Reuben Yeakel was chosen for this important post. The Board of Publication had as its executive officer the general agent, or publisher, the Rev. Charles Hammer. The creation of the two boards proved very wise, and through the years has facilitated the work of the denomination in both these fields.

Due to the increasing disability of Bishop Seybert, the general conference decided to elect three bishops. Bishops Seybert and Long were reëlected and W. W. Orwig was newly chosen. Long and Orwig together with the editors were appointed a committee to draw up a proper course of study for preachers, which had been neglected although ordered four years before. The venerable Adam Ettinger, who had served the church so well through many years and in positions of strategic importance, was once more received into the itinerancy and welcomed back into the church. The form of preacher's license which had been printed by the Ohio Conference was adopted as the official form for the entire denomination.

Sensing a great need for more careful supervision of the rapidly growing work of the Sunday School and the responsibility for even more adequate literature for these schools, the General Conference of 1859 enlarged the Tract Society, organized four years before, to become the

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

Sunday School and Tract Union. J. G. Zinser, apparently a sponsor of this movement, was named chairman of a committee together with Bishop Long and the Editors Koch and Clewell to prepare a constitution for this new society and submit it to the annual conferences for their approval and for the organization of auxiliaries in each conference. This body was the first forerunner of the present Board of Christian Education.

The name of the West Pennsylvania Conference was changed to Central Pennsylvania Conference to conform more accurately with its geographical location. The ninth annual conference was formed from the Iowa District of the Illinois Conference and the Minnesota District of the Wisconsin Conference which together with the missions in Nebraska, Missouri and Kansas became the Iowa Conference. The first session of this conference was held at Grandview, Iowa, May 29, 1861. No conference had wider bounds than this newly created one whose three presiding elder districts bore the names Iowa, Kansas and Minnesota respectively. Something of the primitive life of the residents in these areas and of the difficulty which the leaders constantly confronted may be observed from the fact that the government was still maintaining forts on these frontiers for protection against the Indians. The presiding elder, the Rev. Israel Kuter, conducted the first quarterly conference on the Minnesota District at an appointment thirty miles north of Fort Ridgley and found it necessary to appease the powerful Sioux Indians on several occasions by gifts and bartering trinkets. Several times he barely escaped with his life while his less fortunate pastors, the Revs. L. Seeder and A. Nerenz, and almost their entire congregations lost their lives in the Indian massacres in the fall of 1862.

The venerable Bishop Seybert was somewhat alarmed at the many recommendations for change and revision of the *Discipline* which appeared at the General Conference of 1859. Of the forty such propositions only a comparatively few were adopted. Seybert seemed particularly opposed to enlarging the power of the bishops, to discontinuing the office of presiding elder, and to the recording of baptized children as members of the church, all of which were defeated by the general body. Regarding these measures Bishop Seybert wrote to a minister in the East just before the session of the general conference:

"I rejoice that the preachers of the East Pennsylvania Conference are not so easily persuaded to approve and support the many new propositions to improve and change our Book of Discipline, especially that your conference does not approve of the proposal to take children into the Church simply by virtue of their having been baptized. Such a step I say would be to lay the foundation for a heap of dead bones among us. But I am comforted with the confidence that there is too much salt among us to allow such a motion to prevail."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Spreng, S. P., *Life of Seybert*, p. 354f.



After the session of the general conference, Bishop Seybert travelled and preached a bit, and on December 18, 1859, wrote his last letter to John Spatz who lived near Greensburg, Ohio. On December 29th, he arrived at the home of Isaac Parker, a few miles west of Bellevue, Ohio, where he died the following January 4, 1860.

#### d. Appreciation of Bishop John Seybert

Next to the founder himself the man who influenced the Evangelical Association most during its first sixty years was Bishop John Seybert. He was the oldest son of Henry Seybert, a former Hessian mercenary in the service of the British government during the Revolutionary War, and was born in Manheim, Pennsylvania, July 7, 1791. The family were Lutherans but soon after his father died, when Seybert was only fifteen, his mother left her family to join a communistic religious cult called the Harmonites. Left to shift for himself, John learned the cooper's trade, and had established a good business which he gave up to become a minister of Jesus Christ. He dated his conversion to June 21, 1810. His ability was soon recognized and later that year he was appointed leader of the classes at Manheim and at Lehn's near Mt. Joy. Licensed as a probationer in 1819, Seybert did some preaching but did not begin to travel until September, 1820, and then in 1822 was ordained as deacon, and in 1824, as elder. If it ever was true that a man gave himself completely to the church, it can most certainly be said of Bishop John Seybert during the next forty years of his life.

His promotions in the church came rapidly. In 1825 he was chosen a presiding elder and when in 1839, the general conference decided that the church needed a bishop, he was the one who was chosen. Thereafter, perhaps more than ever before, he literally poured out his life for his church and constantly extended his travels in ever widening circles. The Evangelical Association took root and grew everywhere he went. His method was always very personal. When he dealt with ministers, it was with that inimitable personal touch which won the hearts of all his associates, and when he worked among laymen, it was that same spirit of personal concern for each individual which won so many converts to Christ and friends for the bishop. After a long hard journey and a sermon at the end of the day, Seybert once started out late at night to visit a man who lived high on a mountain side. Early the next morning he returned with great joy because he had been able to help that man to find salvation. The very last entry in his *Journal* was "Eine Seele gerettet" (one soul saved).

When Seybert cast his lot with the Evangelicals, the church numbered about 400 members and when he joined the ranks of the ministry he was one of twenty itinerant preachers who ministered to about 2,000 members. By the time of his death his church had grown to 40,000

members and there were almost six hundred itinerant and local preachers. Like Bishop Asbury, the great missionary bishop of the Methodist Church, Seybert, too, remained unmarried and perhaps because of this fact developed numerous eccentricities which all his friends accepted and expected. His clothes were always simple, sometimes even patched, and his large heavy boots were invariably oiled, never shined. Some of his more caustic criticisms were delivered against the fashions of the times and those who allowed themselves to be enamoured more of proper dress and form than of a deep religious interest. Equally adept was Bishop Seybert in his subtle and droll addresses against alcoholic beverages and tobacco which invariably were seriously interpreted. By no means was Seybert considered the greatest preacher of his time, but a more effective minister or missionary the denomination has not known. No one will ever know the countless number of persons and families that he led to Christ and into the church and the extent of his opening new preaching places and founding congregations which became the frontier conferences of the church before the Civil War.

Seybert would want no word written about his sufferings endured for the cause to which he dedicated his life, but it must be told that on numerous occasions he actually risked his very life to keep preaching appointments. Undismayed by natural barriers, intrepid amidst the terrors of mountain passes and wintry blasts, and undaunted by threats against his life, Seybert travelled on until the end of his life. His *Journal* reveals that his journeys totaled 175,000 miles, most of which he travelled on horseback and in later years by horse and wagon. Only occasionally did he travel by rail or canal. On one occasion he missed the canal boat and so he walked the rough tow-path, carrying his saddlebags which always served as his valise, until eleven o'clock at night when he caught up with the boat.

Seybert preached 9,850 times in addition to conducting approximately 8,000 class and prayer meetings. His pastoral visits on the wide uncharted circuits he considered his own numbered over 50,000, one-fifth of which were given to the visitation of the sick and the poor. Blood nor station in life mattered to the humble bishop whose only concern seemed to be to bring all men that he possibly could to God through Jesus Christ. He gave not only himself but all his means to the work of the church. He gave thousands of books to the poor and sold even greater numbers throughout the West. Bishop Seybert understood the value of religious literature. He loaned thousands of dollars to help those in stress. Once he purchased a widow's home at a sheriff sale and deeded it back to her and on another occasion purchased a weaver's loom from a sheriff who was taking it to be sold for the weaver's debts.

Bishop Seybert was happy in his work, even though it meant suffering and ridicule, even to mob violence and being pelted with eggs while preaching. That at times he was dejected and deeply tempted, especially in his earlier years, is registered in his *Journal*.

A few examples taken from his *Journal*:

"Today Satan tried me sorely. I realized strong feelings of envy and anger within me, which pained me deeply."

And again,

"This was for me a hard day. My temptations were of such weight and force, as to be well nigh unendurable. It seemed as though all the pollution of the pit of hell was being poured over my soul."

And later,

"Today my wanderings were again full of sadness. I was troubled all day with uprisings of anger and of impatience. This was miserable company."<sup>8</sup>

But through the years of travel he found long hours for meditation and prayer and his later *Journal* entries are remarkably free from such discouragement and despair. In these later years, he found a deep inner source of strength which gave him perfect control of his life, no matter what the external circumstances might be. With all his activity and travel Bishop Seybert was fundamentally of a deeply mystical nature and withal a voluminous reader and a careful student. His library, now in Naperville, Illinois, was, in his day, without doubt, the finest to be found in the denomination. Strikingly prominent among the titles are pietistic and mystical works like the books of Jacob Boehme, Tersteegen, Tauler, Thomas à Kempis, John Bunyan, Arnold, Rambach and Schwenkfeld.

The last will and testament of Bishop Seybert will give us an insight into his character which no other words can possibly afford:

"In the name of God, Amen:

"I, John Seybert, . . .

"First of all I commend my soul into the hands of Jesus, my Redeemer for an eternal happiness, whose unbounded love to mankind I have endeavored to publish for the last forty years, after my death I consign my body to the earth to rest until the day of resurrection.

"As respects the property wherewith it has pleased God to bless me, I order that as soon after my death as conveniently may be, all my just debts (should I have any) and funeral expenses shall be paid by my hereinafter named executor. As for the balance of my property, I dispose of the same as follows:

"I give and bequeath to the Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association the sum of Three Thousand Dollars, . . .

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<sup>8</sup> Quoted in Spreng, S. P., *Life of Seybert*, p. 39f.



" . . . to the Charitable Society of the Evangelical Association the sum of Two Thousand Dollars, . . .

" . . . One Hundred Dollars to each of the six children of my brother David Seybert whose names are respectively as follows: John, Elizabeth, Maria, Christian, Magdalena, and Aaron, . . .

" . . . to my beloved mother Susannah Seybert, now of Economy in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, the sum of Two Hundred Dollars, . . .

" . . . One Hundred Dollars to Daniel Fasig of the town of Manheim, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in Trust, for the following use and purpose, that is to say, he shall apply the same towards the payment of debts which may exist against the meeting house or congregation of the Evangelical Association of the said town of Manheim.

"I authorize, empower and request my hereinafter named executor to purchase from the American Bible Society, in the City of New York, a certain number of Bibles and Testaments not exceeding the sum of Three Hundred Dollars to be given to poor people gratis and to be distributed under the direction of my hereinafter named executor.

"All my books and manuscripts I give and bequeath to the book concern of the Evangelical Association . . . the General Conference shall appoint a committee of three who shall examine the said books and manuscripts and if in their opinion there should be any which might not be good, they may destroy or otherwise dispose of the same. Such of my books as may not be wanted in the Book Room aforesaid, I direct shall be sold and proceeds paid over to my executor.

"And lastly I nominate, constitute and appoint my friend Joseph Long of Columbiana County, Ohio, and now one of the Bishops of the Evangelical Association to be the Executor of this my last will and Testament, . . ."

Signed John Seybert—April 1, 1856.

Witnessed by John Dreisbach, Charles Hammer and Wm. Bersch.<sup>9</sup>

When the body of Bishop John Seybert was laid to rest near Bellevue and Flat Rock, Ohio, the Evangelical Association lost one of its greatest leaders and most tireless and successful workers.

#### e. General Conference of 1863

After the opening of the thirteenth session of the general conference in Buffalo, New York, on Thursday morning, October 1, 1863, while the bishops withdrew for consultation regarding the work of the conference, the members of the general conference requested the venerable John Dreisbach, a delegate from the Ohio Conference, to speak to them. Dreisbach consented and spoke of the days when he had worked with Albright and the early fathers; he commended the conference for its achievements and congratulated it for having such ex-

<sup>9</sup> From a copy of the original Will and Testament of John Seybert made by the Probate Court of Cuyohoga County, Ohio, and now in the collection of the Historical Society of the Evangelical Church, Reading, Pennsylvania.

cellent leaders. He stressed the necessity of giving primary attention to the rapidly expanding West. While not entirely due to his address, it is significant that this conference voted to send two missionaries to California.

The organization of the Board of Missions just four years before had apparently caused a much wider dissemination of missionary information and had developed an intense missionary interest throughout the denomination. The General Conference of 1863 directed the Board of Missions to give serious thought to ways whereby the recently emancipated colored population in the South might be evangelized. Three years before the Board of Missions had selected Frederick W. Heidner of the Illinois Conference and Francis C. Hoffman of the Central Pennsylvania Conference to be the missionaries of the church among the heathen. Central Africa and India were discussed as possible places for such a mission and the choice finally settled on India. Since the board considered it wise that these young missionaries should also study medicine it was decided that they should not leave for India before the General Conference of 1863. This was a fortunate action for by 1863 it was discovered that the costs of operating such a mission in India were far beyond the funds in the treasury. It was decided, however, to send an additional missionary to Germany. At the meeting of the Board of Missions just after the general conference, John Walz was sent to Germany, destined to become one of its chief leaders; and three instead of two missionaries were sent to the Pacific coast, the third to work in Oregon. The Germany Conference was also granted permission to found a mission institute and to establish a periodical to be called *Der Evangelische Botschafter*.

Another insight into the increased missionary zeal is obtained by a glance at a missionary meeting held during the session of the New York Conference at Suspension Bridge, New York, April, 1863. The Corresponding Secretary of the General Missionary Society preached a powerful missionary sermon and made a strong appeal for the support of the cause of missions. That small congregation contributed over \$1,111, more than half of which was given by the forty ministers present. One layman who held a mortgage of \$450 against the church property offered to turn this sum into the missionary offering that night if such a sum could be raised. It was done. Someone suggested that they raise an additional \$50 to make President Lincoln an honorary member of the Missionary Society. No sooner was this done than a Canadian delegate offered the first five dollars toward an additional fifty to make Queen Victoria an honorary member as well. The unprecedented nature of this offering becomes more apparent when it is remembered that previously such conference offerings amounted to from forty to fifty dollars.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> CB, May 2, 1863.

The General Conference of 1863 faced a problem which had been present before, but which now was increasing with the election of more and more leaders of the church as general officers. These leaders were best acquainted with the needs of the church and the major problems of the general conference. There was then no law, as at present, making general officers advisory members of the general conference. Since they were general officers, their respective conferences had not elected them as delegates, and consequently they had no voice in the business of the general conference. This problem has not been entirely solved to the present, even with the advisory membership of the general officers, for some annual conferences elect and others do not elect as delegates to the general conference, general officers, who are members of their annual conference. Some annual conferences do not elect any of their members who are general officers as delegates to the general conference, on the basis that these general officers, by virtue of office, are advisory members of the general conference and may debate any question on the conference floor even though they do not have the right to vote. Other annual conferences elect members of their conference who are general officers as delegates to the general conference, and so at each general conference session at the present some of the general officers are regular members and others are only advisory members.

The problem in 1863 was quite serious, too, for many of the older leaders had died and in many instances persons quite unfamiliar with the general problems of the church had been sent in their places. There was also a rather marked opposition to the discussion of general conference problems by the bishops, especially in matters of debate. At that session the general officers were made advisory members which at that time meant very little, for numerous and only casual visitors, some even from other denominations, were also accorded this honor. The difficulty was remedied just a few years later when the general officers were made voting members by virtue of their office. In 1879 all *ex officio* memberships in the general conference were abolished. Although the general officers of the Evangelical Association, excepting the General Secretary of Sunday Schools, and the Young People's Alliance, the Field Secretary of the Missionary Society, and the Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Church Extension, were granted the privilege of voting in their general conference, after the division in the church, the rule observed since 1922 provides that in this highest body of the Evangelical Church only such general officers shall vote who have been duly elected as delegates from their respective conferences.

For the first time in the history of the Evangelical Association the bishops, in harmony with the request of the previous general conference, delivered an episcopal message to the general conference. This docu-



ment was a lengthy presentation of the state of the church and of the status of the various branches of the work of the denomination and also a presentation and discussion of the major problems confronting the general conference. Its reading consumed most of the morning session on October 2. That the message was favorably received was true in part, but no sooner was the message concluded than J. J. Esher rose to raise objection to the pessimistic note of the address on two points, the magnifying of (1) disloyalty in the denomination and (2) the feeble condition of the educational institutions. While the episcopal address was unaltered the general impression on these points was corrected by later actions and reports in the general conference. Among the major constructive elements of this first episcopal message were the plea to select only the best qualified men for the Christian ministry, the recommendation of district meetings for ministers, the improvement of services of public worship, and a call to the wider and proper use of catechetical instruction. This episcopal address was delivered in the German language and was later translated into the English language. The custom of opening each quadrennial session with such an episcopal message has persisted to the present.

Due to the marked differences of opinion on the issues involved in the Civil War, and remembering the difficulties incurred earlier through doctrinal differences, this general conference gave certain instructions to the editors embodied in a set of rules entitled "General Directions for the Editors of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and *The Evangelical Messenger*." These directions contained admonitions to conduct the papers in accordance with the Holy Scripture and the church *Discipline*, to guard, advocate and defend the various interests of the church, and to treat impartially all well written articles and, in cases of controversy, to grant each party equal right to be heard. The problems arising from the Civil War will be treated later in this chapter where the social issues of this period have been assembled.

In addition to authorizing the organization of a conference in Germany, three other new conferences were established in North America: the Canada, Michigan and Kansas Conferences. The membership increase during the preceding quadrennium was less than ten thousand but the expansion of the church in new conferences and missions continued apace. For some time it was felt that the church should be represented in the nation's capital city and accordingly the Central Pennsylvania Conference established a mission in Washington, D. C., in 1864. Many conferences, especially the Illinois, approved the venture but, even though supported by the Board of Missions for a time, the mission did not succeed and the property was sold.

The old custom of discussing on the floor of the general conference, in their absence, the qualifications of the nominees for the office of bish-

op was discontinued. It was decided that two bishops were to be elected and that six nominees should be named by ballot. Joseph Long, W. W. Orwig, J. J. Esher, Solomon Neitz, J. G. Zinser and Francis Hoffman were nominated and immediately it was moved that the election should be held without further discussion. On the first ballot Bishop Joseph Long was reelected but the second and third ballots brought no election. After the second ballot it was resolved that only Orwig, Neitz and Esher should be regarded as candidates and after the third ballot Orwig withdrew. On the fourth ballot J. J. Esher was elected by thirty-five out of sixty-five votes.

Before the session of the conference there had been some talk of electing three bishops because of the age of Bishop Long and the poor health of Bishop Orwig, but the press of financial conditions during the Civil War caused the election of only two bishops. Considerable sentiment had also developed against the reelection of Bishop Orwig because of his poor health, his opposition to secret societies and his avowal that, if reelected, he would ask for an increase in salary for the bishops. On the other hand many delegates favored Solomon Neitz because of his general excellence and his preaching ability and a few because he was in favor of secret societies. Esher's support was due in part to his youth, his experience on the Western frontier, and to the fact that he had had a large part in founding Plainfield College. When Orwig withdrew his name from candidacy many of his votes, especially those of the Ohio delegation and a few from East Pennsylvania, were cast for Esher, partly because he, like Orwig, was known to be opposed to secret societies, and was theologically quite conservative.

The amazing fact in this election was the strong support for Neitz after he had previously been arraigned before his own and the general conferences for heresy. Apparently his good will among the delegates was not impaired for even on the eleventh day of the general conference, during the absence of the bishops, Neitz was elected by ballot to be the presiding officer. Reuben Yeakel, who attended this and other previous sessions of the general conference, asserts that before the election of bishops a caucus had been held to gather support for the election of Neitz. The fact that the general conference dispensed with the open discussion of the candidates and that he polled so many votes despite the irregularities connected with his name, might lend support to this opinion.

The new general officers chosen at this session included W. W. Orwig as the editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*, William Yost as secretary of the Missionary Society and Reuben Yeakel as secretary of the Sunday School and Tract Union and editor of the Sunday School literature. Solomon Neitz was almost unanimously elected as the presiding elder to have charge of the missions in Germany but resigned the fol-

lowing day because of temporal and family circumstances. J. G. Wollpert was then selected for this important post. Due to the tremendous increase in costs of living, the salaries of the general officers were raised.

During these years the church lost some of her choice leaders and pioneers among whom were the Revs. Jacob Kehr, George Adam Blank, John Kleinfelter and Lewis May. Hereafter it will be possible to mention the deaths of only the very outstanding leaders of the denomination.

#### f. The General Conference of 1867

That theological opinions had not as yet become uniform in the church was quite evident during this quadrennium. Articles from the junior Bishop Esher and others in *Der Christliche Botschafter* stressed the conservative point of view and the indomitable Solomon Neitz had a sermon on "Entire Sanctification" printed in a newspaper in Allentown, Pennsylvania, in which he published his views. The controversial statements which provoked further charges against him included:

". . . However, the defeated but not annihilated power of sin will maintain itself in the life of one who is sanctified, on the one hand by involuntary movings which are present before the better will can prevent them, and, on the other hand, by an intermixing of sinful elements even into actions that spring from a holy source. . . . The virtues of those who stand in holiness are usually entangled inseparably with their faults, and so entirely amalgamated with them, that these often represent but their other side, which should remind us emphatically of the deep radicality of the sin-principle in our being. . . . For, alas, we must recognize in our inward man a continuous root of sin, a certain evil potency, which seeks to maintain itself in all the activities of our lives. . . . But by thus overcoming, the new life will expand more and more, and the power of the old man becomes weaker, and limits itself more and more to the mortal body—which is not yet regenerated—and will end certainly at last, if not sooner, in the death of this body, as being the seat, though not the source of sin."<sup>11</sup>

By this time Neitz was no longer standing alone as a leader and writer on this point of view. Very similar indeed were the views held by T. G. Clewell, the editor of *The Evangelical Messenger* since 1859. Clewell contended in his articles that sin consisted only in the active transgression of the law of God and also maintained a very high place for conversion which for him included not only regeneration and justification but also the eradication of sin and the beginning of the life of holiness and sanctification. Sin, then, was conquered in regeneration and entire sanctification was accordingly unnecessary. Neitz also held a very large place for regeneration, although allowing that sin

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<sup>11</sup> *The Lehigh County Patriot*, Allentown, Pa., June 11, 1867.



constantly remained and required the tireless effort of the Christian to overcome it. To the one entire sanctification was unnecessary and to the other impossible; both were at variance with the Wesleyan interpretation of the doctrine of Entire Sanctification and Christian Perfection, which had been adopted by the denomination and printed in its *Discipline*.

With the opening of the fourteenth session of the general conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on October 10, 1867, came the perennial charges preferred against Solomon Neitz by W. W. Orwig. After some lengthy discussion the sermon from the *Lehigh County Patriot* was read before the body. Neitz explained his position to the assembly and, as before, Orwig insisted that he wanted no punishment meted out to Neitz but simply a clarification of the doctrine. The matter was referred to a committee which found three points of variance in Neitz's doctrine, but brought a recommendation of acquittal whereupon the conference adopted the report and thereby,

"Resolved, That after thoroughly examining the above named sermon in the light of the Scriptures and our disciplinary article, we have come to the conclusion that he makes use of terms, phrases and figures of speech of which we decidedly disapprove; but upon his explanation it appears to us that he does not design to teach doctrines essentially different from those held by our Church, and therefore we unanimously recommend his acquittal."<sup>12</sup>

For greater clarification and the avoiding of any further irregularities the general conference appointed a committee consisting of the bishops and one member from each conference delegation to prepare an authoritative statement on the doctrine of holiness and present it to the general conference. This committee presented a statement with five cardinal points reiterating the essential position already set forth in the article on the subject in the *Discipline*. When the reading was completed, none other than Solomon Neitz rose and moved an amendment to point "2" adding "The Holy Ghost and" to the line which then read—"wrought by the Holy Ghost and Christ dwelling in us . . ."<sup>13</sup> The article as amended was adopted and the most important doctrinal controversy in the history of the denomination had come to a close, save for few later discussions about the positions of Editor Clewell and a presiding elder, Daniel B. Beyers, of Illinois. That Neitz had again lost no good will among his colleagues is shown by the fact that he was chosen the general book agent or publisher, which position he declined later in the sessions and to which office W. W. Orwig was then elected.

<sup>12</sup> *GCJ*, 1867, p. 41.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67f.

Among numerous important matters stressed in the episcopal message in 1867, the bishops commended the representatives for the progress achieved; urged improvements in location, proportion and appointments of church buildings; and particularly exhorted all preachers to advance in theological knowledge and in the manner of preaching. The basis for representation in the general conference was changed from one delegate to every seven ministers to one delegate to every ten ministers in the respective conferences.

Among the new laws enacted by this body was the one discussed four years before which now made all general officers advisory members of the general conference. Heretofore all new laws or revisions of the *Discipline*, excepting Temporal Economy, originated in the annual conferences and could be brought before the general conference only when supported by a two-thirds majority of the aggregate number of members present at the annual conferences. At this session it was decided that the general conference by a three-fourths vote could recommend to the respective annual conferences for approval alterations in the rules and forms contained in the *Discipline*. This simply made it possible for the general conference to initiate legislation in basic constitution without depriving the annual conferences of any of their prerogatives, for under the new rule it is still necessary to obtain the constitutional two-thirds majority affirmative vote of the aggregate number of the members present at the sessions of the annual conferences before any recommendation of the general conference can become law. In the more recent years the optional method of initiating alterations in the rules and forms of the *Discipline* created in 1867 has become the usual procedure. Legislation usually originates in, and alterations in the rules and forms of the *Discipline* are initiated by the general conference, ordinarily upon the recommendation of one or more annual conferences or members thereof, whereupon the annual conferences are asked to vote upon the alterations recommended by the general conference. Finally after all the annual conferences have voted, the board of bishops counts the votes and if at least two-thirds of the members present at the annual conferences have voted for the recommendation, it is declared by the board of bishops to have been adopted and become the law of the church. In very rare instances, when circumstances or emergencies seemed to justify it, action has been taken in harmony with the general conference recommendation before it could be declared by the board of bishops to have become the law. In the case of the removal of the time limit for ministers serving a given field of labor, assignments were made in harmony with the recommended change proposed by the general conference before all the annual conferences had had an opportunity to vote upon the recommendation, because of circumstances that seemed to demand it and the assurance that the

recommendation would be adopted in the light of the overwhelming majority which voted in favor of the proposed change, in such conferences as had already met.

Two laws were enacted regarding the status of the general conference as a court. The first provided that in the event a minister believes that he has been unjustly censured, suspended or expelled, he may appeal to the general conference where his case shall have a final hearing and be disposed of. This rule was changed in 1891, and a special court of appeals was provided for such cases. The second law was even more important than the first. It constituted the general conference the supreme law court of the church to decide the legality of all the acts of the annual conferences, and to decide all cases which may arise between such conferences or the incorporated societies and their officers. This judiciary function of the general conference was limited, however, only to such cases as should be lawfully referred to it for adjudication.

Seven years before, the church had become conscious of their need for a home for orphans but since little was known about the method or cost of operation and since no funds were immediately available, the support of the cause was limited for the time being to a number of articles which appeared in the church papers. The General Conference of 1863, because of the many orphans created by the Civil War, felt the need of an orphanage and authorized the founding of such an institution as soon as the opportunity should present itself, little realizing that the very next year a generous bequest should permit a beginning. The Ohio Conference in 1864 accepted a gift of one hundred acres of land near Tiffin, Ohio, from George Weikert. Two years later they purchased an additional property in Tiffin and elected J. G. Zinser the first superintendent of the orphanage which was opened with eight children on July 1st that year. Because the quarters were too small, both properties were sold and the proceeds used to purchase one hundred seventy acres near Flat Rock, Ohio, where proper buildings were erected and appropriately dedicated on May 3, 1868. The General Conference of 1867 accepted the institution from the Ohio Conference and thereby made it the official orphan home of the denomination, which has ever since been known as the Ebenezer Orphan Home. By the end of the period under consideration in this chapter, the Ebenezer Home had enlarged its assets to \$96,208, largely through the efforts and business acumen of the Rev. Charles Hammer who had been its superintendent for eight years and previously had been the successful manager of the publishing house.

Due to somewhat different conditions in the church life in the larger cities, the East Pennsylvania Conference as early as 1850 had recommended to the general conference that provision be made for a pro-



bationary membership of six months preceding the reception of persons into full membership. The matter was made optional with the local congregation for some time but apparently was not adopted by many congregations. However, by 1867, the statistical report carried a column showing 2,176 probationary members in the denomination. That the practice did not prove satisfactory is shown by the fact that four years later only 1,820 such members are noted and the practice was forbidden after 1871.<sup>14</sup> This same period was one of tremendous growth in membership for by 1871 there were 78,011 members which represented an increase of thirty percent.

#### g. More Doctrinal Troubles

Trouble from a new source came to the church when a young presiding elder of the Illinois Conference, Daniel B. Byers, took the liberty to read a paper before a group of Evangelical ministers on the subject, "A Review of the Proceedings of the General Conference of the Church of the Evangelical Association, held at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, October 1867." Byers, who had attended that general conference, felt free to express his disapproval of the doctrinal decisions of that body and soon had incurred the ill favor of his superiors, especially Bishop Long. The bishop preferred charges against Byers in his own conference not only on doctrinal grounds but also for insubordination, inasmuch as Byers had set himself in judgment of the action of the general conference, the supreme court of the church. When found guilty, Byers freely complied with the demands of his conference to publicly disavow his attacks upon the doctrine and discipline of the church, to give over his document for destruction, and to accept a reprimand from the chairman of his conference.<sup>15</sup>

Editor Clewell of *The Evangelical Messenger* printed an article of his own on the subject, "With all Thy Heart" in the issue of January 8, 1868 and once more set forth his idea that regeneration granted the individual the essential germ of holiness and Christian perfection, which again aroused the defenders of the faith. Three months later on March 6, another of his articles followed on "Facts versus Theories" in which he continued his former position and based this appeal on the essential unity of human nature and the possibility of the growth of the individual in character as long as all his faculties and capacities are bent toward one end. Already in bad graces, Clewell further incurred ill will by an analysis of the Articles of Faith which appeared in *The Evangelical Messenger*, November 10, 1870. He pointed out that the articles were taken from the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England and insisted that a number of them were obsolete. Finally the

<sup>14</sup> *G.C.J.*, 1871, p. 79.

<sup>15</sup> *CB*, April 28, 1869.

Board of Publication was called into special session to deal with Clewell, but he procured a court injunction stopping their action. After proving before a civil court that the injunction should be dissolved, the Board of Publication compelled Clewell to resign and elected Reuben Yeakel in his stead. Sometime later Clewell confessed that he had erred, was reinstated in the ministry, but left the denomination to join the Methodist Church.

After the General Conference of 1867, Solomon Neitz was requested to prepare the copy of the defense which he had made before that body. Either purposely or inadvertently he included statements which he had not made on the conference floor and which were derogatory to Bishop Esher and also to the church *Discipline*. When Bishop Long asked him, at the sessions of the East Pennsylvania Conference in 1868, to withdraw these attacks, Neitz remained silent. Both Long and Esher wrote protesting articles for the church papers, and on June 17th, Long wrote that he would prefer charges against Neitz before his next conference session if he did not recall those attacks before February 1869. Although until 1867 no question about the sincerity of Solomon Neitz could be raised, it certainly was an act of indiscretion to openly attack Bishop Esher and later to force his friend Rudolph Dubs, Editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*, to print in his paper on February 17, 1869 an inelegant doggerel written by himself against Bishop Esher and Bishop Long, entitled "Sporadisches" (Miscellanies). Dubs and Neitz were the best of friends, although Dubs always maintained a doctrinal position which was counted orthodox. Neitz had earnestly promoted Rudolph Dubs for the editorship of *Der Christliche Botschafter*. It may be assumed that Dubs published Neitz's lines because of a deep sense of responsibility which he felt toward him. Later Neitz defended himself before his conference by saying that he did not realize that Dubs would publish his verses.

When the East Pennsylvania Conference met it called Neitz to task and referred his case to a committee of five. After hearing Neitz's defense, the conference asked him to confess that he had made an improper attack upon Bishop Esher (1867) and, although expressing disapproval of *Sporadisches*, they agreed that Neitz had not intended to provoke others to disobedience. In order to rectify somewhat the disregard for the dignity of the episcopacy, the East Pennsylvania Conference,

"Resolved, That we will stand by our worthy Bishops against all unjust attacks, public and otherwise, and that we recognize them as honorable men in their characters and official positions."<sup>16</sup>

That Neitz lost little if any influence through all the charges pre-

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<sup>16</sup> *East Pennsylvania Conference Record*, 1869.

ferred against him is shown by the fact that the following year he was elected a presiding elder.

After the death of Bishop Long, very unfortunately that which had begun as a difference of opinion about doctrine between such men as Long and Orwig on one side and Neitz, Clewell and Byers on the other, soon degenerated into a personal matter with Bishop Esher on the one side and Solomon Neitz, and after his death, Rudolph Dubs, leading on the other. For ten years after 1857, Neitz had expressed himself clearly and freely but after 1867, save for the insubordination episode in 1869, he was very effectively silenced largely through Orwig and the feelings of the vast majority of the church who agreed with the doctrine of the *Discipline*. During the next few years, through conservative leadership in the church press, and the influence of the National Holiness Association, the doctrine of holiness was to receive its largest and unopposed consideration.

During the controversial quadrennium, the conservative element in the denomination rapidly gained strength and influence. The General Conference of 1867 had resolved that if any ministers should undertake to publish a monthly magazine in keeping with the sense and spirit of the church, the church would support it. By January 1869, a new magazine, *The Living Epistle*, made its appearance designing to teach holiness in accordance with the Bible and the Evangelical *Discipline*. It was purely a private venture supported by ministers and laymen who were interested in the subject. Reuben Yeakel was the editor, E. A. Hoffman and S. L. Wiest, sons-in-law of W. W. Orwig, were assistants and A. W. Orwig, a son, was the publisher. Articles on holiness from Evangelical and other ministers were printed and soon the subscription list grew to 3,000. Shortly afterward, with none other than Bishop J. J. Esher as its editor, *Das Evangelische Magazin* was founded, which also had the avowed purpose of widely disseminating the doctrine of holiness and leading its readers into the experience of entire sanctification.

Another support for the cause was the National Holiness Association which in 1867 held its first National Camp Meeting at Vineland, New Jersey, under the leadership of the extremely popular Methodist minister, the Rev. John S. Inskip. The second of these meetings was held the following summer at Manheim, Pennsylvania, in the very heart of the oldest section of the Evangelical Association. The methods of Inskip and his associates, which revived much of the fervor of the earlier camp meetings, were adopted by Thomas Bowman, a presiding elder of the East Pennsylvania Conference, who rose very rapidly in influence through his remarkable success as a director of camp meetings at the very beginning of his career on the Pottsville district. The East Pennsylvania Conference of 1868 also endorsed the translation into



English and the publication of S. G. Rhoads' book, *The Old Way*, which was printed in Philadelphia in 1869. Chapters five and six particularly dealt with holiness and the subject was treated in the orthodox manner, carefully avoiding such controversial points as the time and manner of its occurrence.

#### **h. Fallen Leaders**

Slowly the ranks of the early leaders of the Evangelical Association were being depleted. Bishop Joseph Long, John Dreisbach, Absalom Schaefer, Adam Ettinger and Philip Wagner had attended their last general conference. Just before the close of this period, two other leaders, J. P. Leib and Christopher Yeakel, passed on to their reward. It is possible to note only briefly the passing of Bishop Long and the Rev. John Dreisbach.

#### **Bishop Joseph Long**

Bishop Joseph Long died on June 23, 1869, after having given a quarter of a century to the general superintendency of the church. He was born October 21, 1800, and when scarcely twenty-two years of age entered the itinerancy and was assigned the Somerset Circuit. Because of the responsibility of supporting three families, his parents, and the family of a helpless brother, in addition to his own family, Long was forced to retire from the ministry shortly after he had been chosen the chairman of the important General Conference of 1830. By 1841 he was once more in the ranks of the itinerancy and at the next General Conference in 1843 was elected to the episcopacy.

Bishop Long was a clear thinker, constructive in his attitudes, and one of the very strongest preachers in the history of the Evangelical Church. Although given little opportunity to obtain a formal education, Bishop Long fostered educational institutions for the denomination, even to the degree of applying part of his estate to the maintenance of Greensburg Seminary after he had purchased that institution, located at Greensburg, Ohio. In all the doctrinal controversies through which he steered the general conference, Bishop Long invariably defended the official position of the denomination and in this, as well as in other matters, left the impression that he was a stern disciplinarian. He was very kind and helpful in his relations with the young ministers of the church. Once he actually offered to trade his fine saddle horse for an old blind one belonging to Charles Hammer. Although eccentric, he was humble and plain, like his colleague John Seybert. It must have been an interesting sight in 1857 to have seen the tall bishop leading a procession of the ministers of the East Pennsylvania Conference up Broadway in New York City. William Yost says that group of ministers, having arrived in New York together for their annual conference session, walked up Broadway, two by two, with

Bishop Long leading on, carrying his saddle bags in one hand and an umbrella in the other.<sup>17</sup>

Bishop Spreng has written an excellent paragraph contrasting the natures of Bishops Seybert and Long, contemporary leaders of the church:

"One supplied indeed what the other lacked. Both were perhaps equally pious, but Long, though less is known of him, was the greater preacher. Seybert was practical and spiritual in his preaching; Long was profound and overwhelmingly powerful. When once Bishop Long was fully launched in his discourse, he swept his congregations along like a veritable cyclone. There was the element of majesty in his preaching, and few equalled him in the force and eloquence of his delivery. Seybert was a son of consolation; Long a son of thunder. Seybert had the advantage in the geniality of his disposition; Long being often morose and sometimes even acrid in his demeanor. The two bishops were mutual friends, entertaining sentiments of affection and profound respect for each other. The thought of jealousy never found any room in them. Each believed thoroughly in the other's sincerity, and they mutually confided in each other's judgment in matters of administration. The Church was safe in the hands of two such men."<sup>18</sup>

Near the end of his life, Bishop Long suffered much pain in his eyes. Very early in his ministry he had fallen a victim to chills and fever, and following the custom of his day, he used powerful medicines to overcome these maladies, which undermined his nervous system and weakened his vital organs. Often he persisted in performing his duties when he should have been in bed. "His brusqueness of manner, cutting words, contemptuous gestures and apparent lack of sociability were largely caused by his physical and psychological condition, and on account of these traits he was frequently misjudged and often misunderstood."<sup>19</sup>

In his later years, Bishop Long sold his home in Ohio to his great advantage and moved to Illinois, where once more his property increased greatly in value so that at his death he was able to leave a considerable legacy to the church. He was exceedingly fond of his wife, Catharine, who preceded him in death by a little more than a year. Yeakel who has written the only volume on the life of Bishop Long, characterizes him as

"a massive intellect and a mighty moral stature, struggling like a Hercules through years of adversity, and amid great responsibilities, yet all the time hampered by a feeble body, and almost constantly

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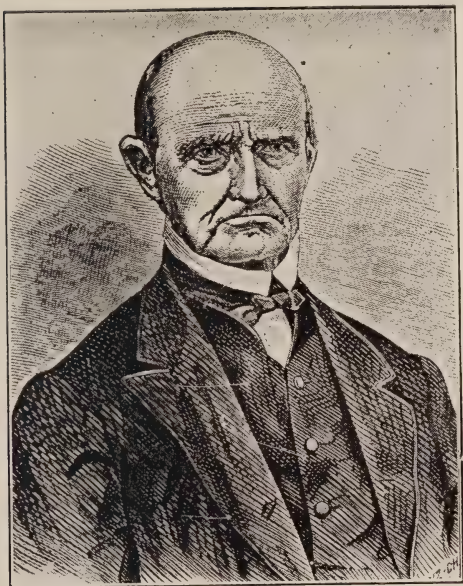
<sup>17</sup> YR, p. 133.

<sup>18</sup> Spreng, S. P., *op. cit.*, p. 255.

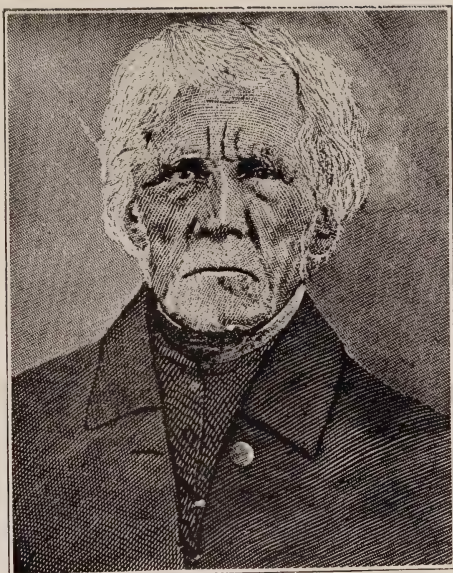
<sup>19</sup> YR, p. 192.



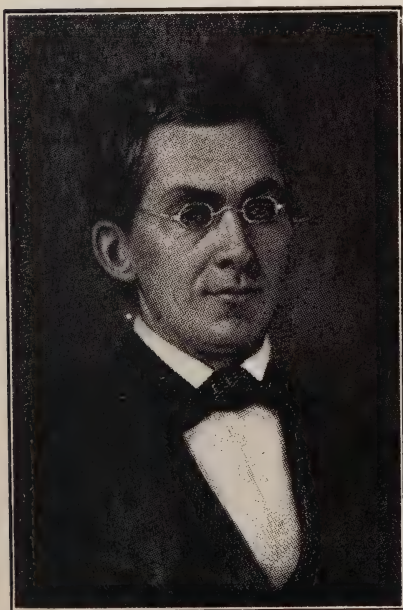
## EARLY EVANGELICAL LEADERS



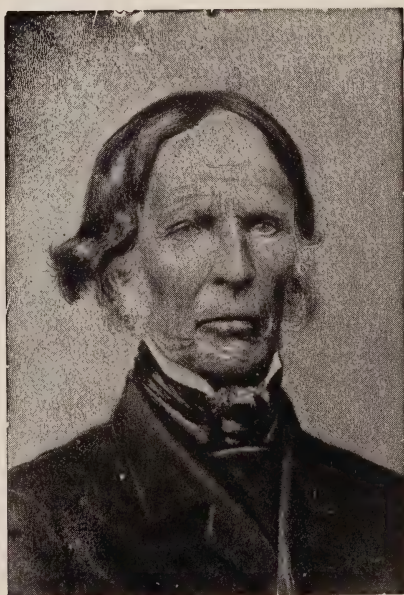
JOHN DREISBACH



HENRY NIEBEL



W. W. ORWIG



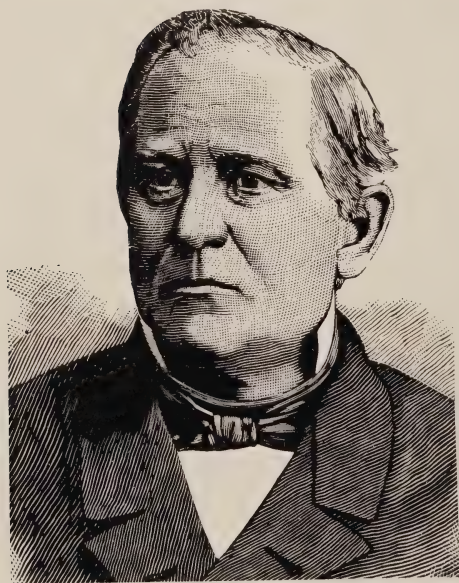
JOSEPH LONG



## EARLY EVANGELICAL LEADERS



JOHN SEYBERT



SOLOMON NEITZ

battling with the morbid conditions of temper and thought thus super-induced." <sup>20</sup>

### John Dreisbach

To live through two generations of leadership in any organization is not given to many but such was the fortune of John Dreisbach who was born June 5, 1789, and in his seventeenth year began to travel as one of Albright's assistants. When only twenty-five years of age he was elected the first presiding elder of the church and the president of the conference and travelled over the entire church then covering an area of about thirty thousand square miles. He not only served his church, but his state as well, for in 1828 and 1829 he was a member of the State Legislature of Pennsylvania. In his later years, for almost a quadrennium, he served as the editor of *The Evangelical Messenger*.

Dreisbach was over six feet tall, very impressive in appearance, and kept the elasticity of his step even till the General Conference of 1867, the last which he attended. Like his colleagues he had little opportunity for organized study, but was very observant and utilized the advantage of wide contacts with persons in many denominations. He was the very first to advocate educational institutions and in general represented a very high type of culture. He was a good preacher and had excellent executive ability. He wrote no less than thirty-five hymns in German, others in English, in addition to compiling a song book as early as 1821 and editing many of the editions of the official hymn books of the denomination. The design of the seal on the preachers' licenses of the Evangelical Church was the work of his hands.

When John Dreisbach died August 20, 1871 the entire Evangelical Association down to the youngest member had suffered a personal loss.

#### i. The General Conference of 1871

Since the general conference met in its fifteenth session in October 1871 at Naperville, Illinois, just a few days after the disastrous Chicago fire, it was natural for the general conference to consider the formation of a mutual fire insurance company for the whole church, especially since several Evangelical church buildings had been destroyed in this Chicago fire. The possibilities were thoroughly investigated during the following quadrennium, but the matter had to be dropped finally in 1875 because the regulations of the various states, in which the Evangelical Association was established, required financial reserves greater than the entire denomination was able to provide for this purpose. This conference also considered the changing of the name of the denomination from Evangelical Association to Evangelical Church, but

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<sup>20</sup> Yeakel, R., *Life of Bishop Long*, 1897, p. 131, cf. also pps. 131-220 for analysis of Long's life and character.

after some discussion, it was resolved to postpone such a change indefinitely.

By 1871 the influence of the doctrine of holiness had reached its greatest height in the Evangelical Association. Bishop J. J. Esher was reëlected and Reuben Yeakel was newly elected to the episcopacy. The majorities for Esher and Yeakel in the vote for nominations were so decisive that it was voted that the nominating ballot be considered the election itself. Neither before nor since has such a procedure been followed. Equally unanimous in their support of the doctrine of holiness were the men chosen to the other general offices that year. Rudolph Dubs was reëlected the editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and Jacob Hartzler of the Central Pennsylvania Conference was chosen the editor of *The Evangelical Messenger*. *The Living Epistle* and *Das Evangelische Magazin*, holiness organs founded during the quadrennium, were now accepted by the Board of Publication as official organs of the church; Jacob Young was selected to edit the former and William Horn, the latter. William F. Schneider of the Wisconsin Conference was unanimously elected publisher by acclamation.

Although, indeed, there may still have been ministers whose personal beliefs were somewhat heterodox there was now no longer any paper in which their views might be set forth, for the positions of control were all in the hands of those who completely supported the official position of the church in all matters pertaining to doctrine. This may account for the fact that in 1871, sixty-five articles on holiness appeared in *The Evangelical Messenger* and forty in *Der Christliche Botschafter*, an all time record. The next year, W. W. Orwig's book, *Die Heilsfülle* (The Fullness of Salvation), came from the Evangelical Press and, as was to be expected, supported in full the disciplinary doctrine on holiness. Now that opposition to the doctrines of the church had disappeared from the church papers, the previous interest in the subject began to decrease rapidly. By the end of the quadrennium in 1875 only seven articles on holiness appeared in *The Evangelical Messenger* and twelve in *Der Christliche Botschafter*, while in 1871 there had been a combined total of one hundred and five. *The Living Epistle*, at first exclusively a holiness organ, by 1875 had become at least two-thirds a family and Sunday School magazine. *Das Evangelische Magazin* had officially become a Sunday School paper four years before when Horn was chosen as its editor. So the period of doctrinal controversy in the Evangelical Association which began in 1857 came to an end less than twenty years later in 1875.

Unfortunately that which had begun as a struggle between men with intellectual differences had, with a change of the personnel in official positions, degenerated into a struggle of personal rivalries. The ecclesiastical position of the young Bishop Esher and his interpretation of the



powers of the episcopacy as well as doctrinal freedom led a number of other leaders to seek a way to check these somewhat extreme policies. The supporters of Solomon Neitz had at last despaired of electing him to the episcopacy despite his great popularity throughout the church. On several occasions he had come within a few votes of being elected. After four failures he and his followers sought for another leader who might not have any stigma like heterodoxy attached to his name and who therefore might be elected as a check to the personal policies of Esher. So already in 1871 Rudolph Dubs, then only thirty-four years old, was one of six who were nominated for the office of bishop. Although Reuben Yeakel was elected with Esher by a great majority, largely through his strong support of the orthodox position of the church during the preceding quadrennium, Dubs had been associated with the office to which he was soon to be elected.

Preceding the General Conference of 1871, the book business had fallen off considerably. The management had carried a very small stock to decrease overhead expenses and all efforts were bent toward paying to the annual conferences as large dividends as possible. The result was that much of the business from Evangelical churches and pastors was turned to other book stores and publishing houses. By 1871, however, Mr. Schneider had led the church once more to become enthused about their own publishing house and arranged to carry a stock sufficient to meet all the needs of the denomination. On the record of this general conference and the several succeeding ones, the publisher's report carried a statement so detailed that even the total number of pages printed during the period was included. By action of the General Conference of 1871, ministers were now permitted to publish books without submitting them to an examination committee. All types of inducements were offered to encourage ministers to write books, and special requests were made for manuscripts which would be appropriate for Sunday School use. Following a suggestion in the episcopal address, this conference voted to publish a theological text book which would set forth the biblical doctrines as understood by the denomination. Four years later the publishing agent was authorized to pay the sum of \$1,000 for the best manuscript submitted on "Systematic Theology" to be selected and accepted by a special committee of the general conference for that purpose.<sup>21</sup>

The last years of the period under consideration were the years of most remarkable growth in the entire history of the church. By 1871 the number of catechumens had increased to 5,186 which was an increase of almost one hundred percent for the quadrennium. The increase of 27,253 pupils in the Sunday Schools was surpassed only once

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<sup>21</sup> *GCJ*, 1875, p. 82.

between 1875 and 1879 when 28,524 were added to the rolls. The church membership increased about twenty-five percent from 1871 to 1875, a net increase of 19,062 members, which numerical growth still remains unequalled in all the history of the church. Among the many reasons for this remarkable growth must be mentioned the constant increase of emphasis upon Sunday Schools and catechetical classes as well as the renewed activity of the camp meetings and the great emphasis given to the doctrine of holiness with its consequent effects of personal pietistic zeal and evangelistic effort.

#### j. The General Conference of 1875

The important sixteenth general conference convened in Philadelphia October 14, 1875. The episcopal address deplored the reduction in membership growth during the quadrennium from twenty-nine percent in 1871 to twenty-two percent in 1875. Two years before Editor Dubs had called attention to the fact that the membership of the church was no longer increasing in its usual proportion,<sup>22</sup> and especially pointed out that in 1873 there were at least two thousand members lost without any specific reason. That this matter weighed heavily upon the leaders and ministers of the church is shown by the fact that during this very quadrennium the church actually had the largest net gain in membership in its history. These leaders apparently were interested more in ratios than in totals achieved and were therefore dissatisfied because they had done no better. The address of the bishops urged an increasingly higher standard for ministers and suggested the publication of a "Systematic Theology" and also a theological quarterly. The matter of changing the church name after a brief consideration was definitely dropped by this conference.

Four years before the general conference had appointed a committee for the purpose of drafting a series of laws governing specific cases of polity which might arise in local congregations particularly. The report of this committee was discussed at great length and the adopted findings finally ordered printed in the church *Discipline*. These laws were in the old Wesleyan form of questions and answers and were supposed to facilitate the administration of the work in the local church. Although their constitutionality has never been challenged, it must be admitted that these laws were never submitted to the annual conferences for approval. By their nature they do not fit into the section of Temporal Economy. Since no cases like those considered in the questions were referred to the general conference, they cannot be regarded as judicial decisions of the conference. Therefore, it must be concluded that they were simply approved solutions to hypothetical cases which

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<sup>22</sup> CB, August 27, 1873.

might arise in any congregation and as such they have been highly regarded ever since.

Six conferences were formed in 1875, three of them designed particularly to group together the German congregations in the various sections of the church. The German churches along the Atlantic seaboard in the East Pennsylvania and Central Pennsylvania Conferences were united to form the Atlantic Conference. The Erie Conference was formed from the German churches of the West Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio conferences. The third German body was to be constituted of all the German churches in Iowa and was to retain the name Iowa Conference. The English churches in that state became the Des Moines Conference. The Pacific Conference was designed to include all the churches on the West coast while the churches in Southern Indiana, Ohio and Illinois were united with those in Kentucky to form the Southern Indiana Conference. Permission was also granted to divide the churches in Europe into two conferences which was done in 1879 when the Switzerland Conference was newly formed.

Once more the question of a bi-lingual church provoked much discussion when the formation of the German conferences came before the general body. This problem was entirely different from that of 1850 when the Central Pennsylvania area was the first to become predominantly English. Now the question of properly caring for the German work came before a general conference which was reconciled to the fact that the major portion of the church was English and that the future of the church lay in that field. The bishops recognized this trend and, as late as 1871, in the episcopal address, urged the ministers and congregations of the different language groups to be tolerant with each other. Just four years before they had still pleaded for young ministers who could preach in both English and German. While the ultimate outcome of this complex, though never crucial, problem was clearly seen by 1875 it was to be more than a quarter of a century until the services of the denomination were to be conducted almost exclusively in the English language.

The Board of Publication submitted a very important report in which there appeared once again a very detailed account of all the published materials. Rudolph Dubs was requested to revise the first volume of the history of the church and prepare a second volume. It was also decided that a small and condensed history of the church should be prepared for Sunday Schools and young people. This conference also authorized the publication of a volume of sermons in German as an aid to the study of young ministers, of J. Koehl's work on *Baptism*, and also Prof. A. Huelster's work on religious psychology. This latter work which appeared in Cleveland the next year under the title *Die Seelenlehre* was one of the very first books ever printed dealing with



the psychology of religion and one of the most scholarly to bear the imprint of the Evangelical Press.

The Charitable Society was authorized to grant loans bearing 8% interest but only on first-class mortgages. Since 1876 was to mark the observance of the national centennial, the church decided to join in that celebration and set as the goal to be accomplished within the denomination the raising of \$100,000 for their educational institutions.

It was decided to elect four bishops and the election resulted in the choice of J. J. Esher, Reuben Yeakel, Rudolph Dubs and Thomas Bowman. Jacob Hartzler was reëlected as the editor of *The Evangelical Messenger* and Martin Lauer was chosen as editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*. William Yost was named the secretary of the Missionary Society.

At this conference those who opposed Esher's personal manner and his way of interpreting the discipline realized nevertheless that his strength would mean his reëlection. This group was content with the choice of Rudolph Dubs as a bishop for in him it was understood there was a more democratic spirit.<sup>23</sup> That this rivalry in personal ambitions would lead to disrespect for the episcopacy and ultimately to disunion in the church was rather obvious to the leaders with clearest insight.

The outstanding event at this conference, however, was the decision to send missionaries to the Orient. The previous meeting of the Board of Missions had resulted in the adoption of plans which, when approved by the General Conference of 1875, extended the boundaries of the Evangelical Church so wide that the sun was never again to set upon her work. Due to the serious nature of this action, counted by many more important than any ever before transacted, the entire conference knelt in prayer before the decision was made. The motion to establish the Mission in Japan was adopted by a rising vote and the conference sang the doxology in German and English. The church which in seventy-five years had grown to have 1,339 ministers and 95,253 members in America and Europe now cast its influence upon Oriental waters which in due time was to lead to the establishing of the Japan and China Conferences.

## 60. NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE METHODISTS

This period of greatest expansion of the Evangelical Association, during which its influence spread from North America to the continents of Europe and Asia, was also the period of widest recognition for the denomination. The followers of Albright had now come to be universally accepted as a religious denomination and their phenomenal achievements in their short history led other denominations to observe

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<sup>23</sup> Bowman, Thomas, *Historical Review*, Cleveland, 1894, p. 18f.

carefully their methods and growth. More and more friendly through the years have the relations become with other denominations; especially with the Methodists, the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and the Wesleyan Methodists. As early as 1855 a proposed union with the church of the United Brethren in Christ and the Wesleyan Methodist Church was brought before the General Conference of the Evangelical Association, but because it did not come in an official way no action was taken. This consideration, however, may have been the reason for the continued negotiations with the Methodist Episcopal Church which began four years later and continued regularly for about twenty years, and intermittently until the early conferences of the twentieth century.

Dr. William Nast of Cincinnati, representative of the Methodist Church and her strongest leader of the work among the German people, visited the Evangelical General Conference of 1859 at Naperville, Illinois. While his address <sup>24</sup> like others he delivered previously was a plea for mutual understanding and coöperation in taking the gospel to German-speaking people, there is no doubt that he at least invited the consideration of an ultimate union with the Methodists. No representative of the Methodist Church appeared at the General Conference of 1863, apparently on account of the war then at its height.

The negotiations had progressed so far, however, by 1867 that when Nast and his committee visited the Evangelical Conference in Pittsburgh they proposed an actual union of the churches and in several carefully prepared addresses pointed out the advantages to accrue to all from such a merger. Among other important considerations Nast pointed out that such a merger would not mean the annihilation of the smaller Evangelical body, for, while the English work of the Evangelicals would be merged with that of the Methodists, the German work of the Methodists would also be merged and included under the control of the Evangelical supervision. The Evangelicals were not ready for this step, however, and so reciprocated the fine feelings of the fraternal visitors but stressed "unity in spirit" rather than organic union.<sup>25</sup> It should be remembered, of course, that this was not a one-sided courtship for Evangelical delegates were also appointed to visit the General Conferences of the Methodist Church and, indeed, there were some leaders of the Evangelical Association, like C. G. Koch, who felt that the churches should be united, and Rudolph Dubs who, before the Methodist General Conference of 1872, said, "If it is the Lord's will, we may confidently expect its accomplishment."

Once again in 1871 Nast and several companions appeared at the general conference in Naperville. After several appealing addresses by

<sup>24</sup> *GCJ*, 1859, p. 24f.

<sup>25</sup> *GCJ*, 1867, pp. 62f and 86f.

his delegated companions, he brought the whole matter to a climax with his concluding paragraph:

"If that is your decision so tell us frankly, after the manner of Germans. The time for a decision of this question has come. If the union is impractical now then it will become more so at a later period, for the difficulties will increase; therefore, if a union cannot now be accomplished, we should forever dismiss the question, but, nevertheless, love each other fraternally, and each party use the talent intrusted to them. From the bottom of my heart I wish you God's richest blessings!" <sup>26</sup>

Apparently because they feared that the entire denomination might not join in such a union with the Methodists this conference again rejected the proposition and printed its actions in the journal twice:

"WHEREAS, It was decided that it would not be advisable to recommend said union, notwithstanding that such a union, under other circumstances, might be desirable, viz., if it could be accomplished with the general consent of our ministry and membership, but as this does not seem probable for the present, therefore,

*"Resolved*, That we hereby respectfully respond to the friendly greeting and fraternal recognition of the Methodist Episcopal church, through its delegation to this conference, and cherish the most hearty wish that we may ever labor in union of spirit and in peace, without hindering or discouraging one another, and unitedly as far as possible, and with the best success to the glorious cause of our common Lord and Master, in his vineyard, and with all the elect be finally crowned in his heavenly kingdom."<sup>27</sup>

It was also resolved that delegates be sent to convey proper greetings to the general conference of the Methodist Church to meet in Brooklyn and the Revs. Rudolph Dubs, Thomas Bowman and Jacob Young were appointed for that purpose.

Not discouraged by the spurning of all previous offers, the Methodists once again visited the sixteenth general conference in Philadelphia in 1875, and no other than their famous Bishop Matthew Simpson came and addressed the body. Since there were no actual negotiations for union this year, the Evangelical General Conference graciously received the Methodist delegates and appointed the Rev. M. J. Carothers and W. F. Schneider to visit the next session of the Methodist General Conference.

## 61. CLERGY AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

At the beginning of the period covered by this chapter a new custom known as the conference sermon was inaugurated in some of the con-

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 1871, p. 38f.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53f and 72f.



ferences. The Rev. Francis Hoffman preached the first of these conference sermons at the opening of the East Pennsylvania Conference sessions in 1851. The following year the lot fell to the Rev. Solomon Neitz. The records after this make no mention of this commendable custom and so it is fair to assume that it was discontinued.

Several items of legislation were passed relating to the tenure and claims of ministers in the church. The limit for a minister's stay on any given appointment until 1871 was only two years but the general conference that year extended the limit to three years. One of the strongest points in favor of the itinerant system adopted in the beginning by the Evangelical Association was the fact that all the ministers in the itinerancy were practically assured of an appointment. Although not frequently resorted to in later years, it was determined by the General Conference of 1863 that an annual conference need not give an appointment to preachers "if they cannot be useful."<sup>28</sup> The assignment of fields of labor to the preachers has been from the beginning in the power of the bishop and presiding elders, and not at the discretion of the congregation or the wish of the minister. While this principle still maintains unimpaired, larger consideration is given by the bishop and district superintendents to the needs and desires of the congregations or field of labor, the opportunities a field of labor offers to a minister, the record of achievement as well as the desires of the minister, the needs and qualifications of the minister's family, and school privileges. Traces of this democratic modification of church law appear as early as 1860.<sup>29</sup> It should also be said that through the years admission into the ministry has been more and more carefully guarded and made more difficult. Since the Civil War at least the quality of the men received has been of an increasingly higher standard which has led to the almost invariable assurance of an annual assignment to members in the itinerancy.

The General Conference of 1863 found itself faced with a situation hitherto unmet in such a body. In that year Bishop W. W. Orwig was not reelected and some rule had to be adopted to cope with the situation. It was ruled that by electing him a bishop the general conference had thereby taken him out of his annual conference and that Orwig, therefore, had no claim to membership in any annual conference. The burden of finding employment of a general nature or in one of the annual conferences was left with the general conference.<sup>30</sup> In his case it was somewhat simple for Orwig was thereupon chosen editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*. In order to cope with similar situations in the future, a rule was prepared for the *Discipline* in accordance with

<sup>28</sup> *GCJ*, 1863, p. 27.

<sup>29</sup> *YR*, p. 148.

<sup>30</sup> *GCJ*, 1863, p. 39.

the action just described in the Orwig case. Later on this rule was modified to permit a bishop who is not reëlected to claim membership in the conference to which he belonged at the time of his election, if he is able to serve in the itinerancy. If he is unable to serve, the burden of his support falls upon the Publishing House in monthly amounts as determined by the general conference.

The increasingly higher standards for the ministry are mentioned in almost all the episcopal addresses of this period and are somewhat attested, at least, by the record of one clergyman who in eleven years reported one thousand conversions and eight hundred accessions to the church.<sup>31</sup> In 1853 Moses Dissinger, who was later to be one of the unusually popular though quite eccentric and unique preachers, was refused admission to the itinerancy because of lack of culture.<sup>32</sup> There were a number of ministers who lacked the required training suggested by the church of this period and who caused some anxiety for the leaders because of their methods of preaching and working. When one reads the sermons of some of these unlettered men, the crudity of their form and figurative expression immediately indicates the reason for their somewhat limited influence. It is true, however, that in many of the rural districts, especially in Eastern Pennsylvania, long after the Civil War there were still many persons whose natural medium of expression was the Pennsylvania German language. Unfortunately these people had little opportunity to acquire a broad culture and consequently their interests were limited, their thought forms crude, and even their religious expressions sometimes inelegant. To them such preachers as Moses Dissinger and his type made a real appeal and often proved themselves very helpful. It required a sympathetic understanding of their ways of life and thought to be able to help these people in their religious living.

At the closing session of a camp meeting, Moses Dissinger once preached a most effective sermon in his inimitable style in the Pennsylvania German. Because very few of the sermons preached in the Pennsylvania German have been preserved a portion of this one is here given in this dialect:

"Ihr liebe Leut, ihr sagt wir verdammen euch. O wie seit ihr doch betrogen. Wenn ich an der Hoell' staende und es fiel Jemand von euch hinein, und ich koennt ihn noch an den Hohn verwische, ich thaet ihn schnell 'rausziege und thaet ihn ausblöse, und ging schnell mit em nasse Haus-lumpe um ihn her, ums Feuer zu loesche. Nein, wir moechten euch retten und selig sehen. Desshalb zeigen wir euch euren verlorenen Zustand und rufen aus mit lauter Stimme: Siehe das Lamm Gottes, welches der Welt Suende trug."<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> YR, p. 168.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 239.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in YH (2), p. 208.

Another unparalleled passage, rich in its figurative language so characteristic of the Pennsylvania German, is Dissinger's description of the power of the gospel unto salvation.

"Seht nur en mol die Sauflodel an. Die hot der Deifel so erschrecklich verhaust, dass mer meent, sie könnten ihr Lebtag nicht mehr zurecht gemacht werden. . . . Der Deifel hot sie jo ganz zu seine Schuhputzlumpen gemacht, . . . Nau guckt sie nur en mol recht an, . . . Sie haben Nasen wie rothe Pfefferköpfe, Ohren wie Faschnackuchen, Bäuch wie Fässer, und machen Gesichter wie Füchs, wann sie Wespen fressen; und bie all dem wird immer noch drauf los gesoffen und springen nach der Drambottel wie die Bullfroschen auf die rothen Lumpen. . . . ; aber Jesus Christus hat Gnade erworben für alle Sünder . . . Durch die Kraft des Evangeliums kann der verdorbenste Sauflodel errettet werden und Kraft bekommen, dass er in einem Strom Dram, der ihm bis ans Maul geht, schwimmen könnt, Ohne dass er Luft hät davon zu trinken; und wann's ihm der Deifel auch anbieten thät, so könnt er durch die Gnadenkraft des Evangeliums dem Deifel widerstehen und kein Sauflodel in der Höll könnt ihn zu dem verfluchten Dramsaufen zwingen. Darum bekehrt euch! Jesus Christus kann euch helfen."<sup>34</sup>

Conservative men like W. W. Orwig deplored such trends in preaching and favored instead the expository type of presentation which of course required an educational background. Among the greatest preachers of this period were Bishops Long and Esher, Solomon Neitz and John Breitenstein. The better the training these Evangelical preachers had, the more popular they became with Evangelical congregations and other denominations as well. Numerous ministers were given cordial receptions as guest preachers in the pulpits of Lutheran and Reformed churches because of their zeal supported by culture and training, and not a few were gladly received permanently into these and other denominations.

Although for many years the church had made provision for training courses and examinations for ministers, it is a fact that in the earlier years, even at the beginning of this period, the examiners were not very strict. William Yost, who was always most conscientious, wrote that he had to study a great deal to be able to prepare both English and German sermons and be ready for his examination at the conference. When he came to meet his examiner before his ordination as a deacon, he found that the examiner was taking all the candidates separately. Yost writes:

"He instructed me to meet him on a certain morning in a class room in the basement of the church. I met him there according to

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<sup>34</sup> Stetzel, Heinrich, *Kurze Lebensgeschichte von Moses Dissinger*, Allentown, 1892, p. 19f.



instructions, and he delivered the following by way of examination: 'Well, Brother Yost, I heard you preach last night before the conference, and you performed splendidly; everyone was pleased. It is a source of satisfaction to me when our young men get along so well. You had a good deal of theology in your sermon, from which I infer that you are pretty well up in that branch. I shall so inform conference. You may go.' Go I did."<sup>35</sup>

While this was never the approved method of examination, it may well be conceded that there is much to be said for the pragmatic test of a candidate's ability to preach and incidentally to present his theology carefully. The General Conference of 1863 revised the plan of study for preachers and since the new plan was not entirely satisfactory it was resolved four years later that the presiding elders were to examine the candidates for the ministry at their respective quarterly conferences. The bishops stressed careful training for ministers in their message in 1871 and the conference that year entrusted the formation of new courses to the bishops and the editors of the church papers. The necessity of an adequate training was so generally accepted that the Conference of 1875 resolved to make it possible for poor candidates for the ministry to receive financial concessions at the schools of the denomination.<sup>36</sup>

With all these increased requirements demanded of ministers, it is sad to relate that the corresponding financial support was not commensurate. The East Pennsylvania Conference of 1851 decided to make Germantown a station provided they could find a minister who would be willing to accept the salary to be received, which was apparently somewhat in question. J. Eckhart accepted the appointment and found it so satisfactory that he went back a second year which was then the limit for such an appointment. As late as 1863 a class of forty-nine members paid \$19 toward the support of two ministers on their charge while it was admitted that these members spent three times that amount for tobacco alone.<sup>37</sup> Some of the congregations were composed of exceptionally fine and honest business men who through frugal living had managed to live comfortably and wanted their pastors to do likewise. A very unusual method of financing a church building was devised by such business men at Weissport, Pennsylvania, where a church building costing \$6,000 was erected and the cost distributed among the members on the basis of the assessment on their taxable property less any liabilities on the same. Persons who had no property were asked to give what they could and soon the debt was paid.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *YR*, p. 109f.

<sup>36</sup> *GCJ*, 1875, p. 105.

<sup>37</sup> *YR*, p. 174.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

The high standard for Christian conduct among the laity was by no means lowered through these years. The original quarterly conference record of the old Gettysburg Circuit lists numerous charges against laymen and expulsion from the church for such varying reasons as "speaking disrespectfully of the church," "imprudent conduct toward his wife," and for being "contentious."<sup>39</sup> The emphasis on holiness among laity and clergy alike led to the preaching of sermons and the writing of articles which stressed the finest of the Christian virtues. Evangelical laymen were enjoined to strive for humility which was defined:

"It (humility) is the effect of divine grace operating upon the soul and is justly called a Christian grace, for outside of Christendom nothing higher than baseness is known of it. Humility does not oblige a man to wrong himself or the truth by feigning inferiority to others whom he knows to be less gifted, useful, educated and honored. It is known by the absence of pride, vanity, self-seeking, and all forward and ambitious conduct, by modest appearance. Humility is the leaning of a full head of wheat, the freshness of a deep vein of water, the beauty, richness, and fruitfulness of the valley, and the deepest root of the oak of character, to sustain the ever-rising eminence of the heaven aspiring tree."<sup>40</sup>

## 62. MISSIONS EXTENDED TO THE ORIENT

At the beginning of this period, the Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association was supporting twenty-eight home missions while many of the annual conferences were supporting local conference missions in addition, which at times detracted from the interest and support of the denominational missions on the frontier. The first four missions of the church were organized with the parent Missionary Society in 1839. It was a long stride from this beginning to the sending of missionaries to Europe in 1850 and to Japan in 1875. The records are filled with interesting achievements all through these years.

As early as 1853 the Rev. Henry Bucks organized two missionary societies on Upper Milford Circuit to raise money for a foreign mission. Most of the members of these new groups were young people. Their societies aimed to have each member contribute at least one cent per week for missions and of course some gave more. By 1854 the Illinois Conference surpassed all other groups when her contributions supported one third of all the home missions at a time when she numbered only one-eighth of the membership of the denomination. The ministers of this conference frequently gave from \$10 to \$25 for missions and at one of these earlier sessions, when the missionary funds did not suffice

<sup>39</sup> Copy in Historical Society Museum.

<sup>40</sup> *Living Epistle*, 1875, p. 247.

to pay the salaries of their pastors at frontier points, the regular ministers relinquished an additional \$12 of their salaries to help their comrades in the work.

Due to the increased interest and intelligent interpretation of the work of missions, contributions in all quarters increased rapidly during the 1850's. Camp meeting offerings for missions which had previously amounted to \$25 now reached hundreds of dollars. Near the close of this period a missionary offering from the camp meeting at Easton, Pennsylvania, amounted to \$1,525. By 1855 the 27,670 members of the church contributed an average of 41½ cents per member, bringing their offerings for missions that year to the total of \$11,533.70. The first mention of a mission among the heathen occurred in 1853 and two years later \$518.56 had already been accumulated for this specific purpose.

With the organization of the Board of Missions in 1859 and the selection of a full time corresponding secretary, the promotion of the cause of missions really began in earnest. Through wider education and more direct personal appeal for this work, individuals and groups everywhere showed increased interest and support for the cause. Although the General Conference of 1867 was unable to anticipate the marvelous development of the Western areas of the United States, it is a credit to their foresight that the committee on the state of the church that year included in its report,

"For years the stream of immigration flowed westward, hence the West has always been for us a very fruitful missionary field.

"Of late, however, immigration has been directed specifically into Iowa and along the newly built Pacific R. R. We would therefore call attention to the many new settlements and rising towns in that direction, and also to the great want of preachers, especially in the Iowa Conference. Now is the time when church lots ought to be secured along the Pacific R. R., as they might probably be obtained gratis; and hosts of evangelists ought to be sent out that way, for within a few years there will arise at least 100 towns and cities between Iowa and California. . . . We offer the following:

"*Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed to inquire with regard to church lots along the P. R. R., and in consultation with the executive committee of the board of missions take such further steps as may be appropriate."<sup>41</sup>

Little did these leaders dream that their estimate of 100 towns and cities would some day be far exceeded but it was just such keen foresight and readiness to meet all emergencies and accept new opportunities which has led the Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association to be one of the strongest agencies of the denomination. Be-

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<sup>41</sup> *GCJ*, 1867, p. 72.



tween 1867 and 1871 the membership in the church in Europe almost doubled, reaching 6,083; and in the last quadrennium in this period a total of \$255,154.91 was received for missionary work, representing an average annual gift of 67 cents per member.

After dreaming and hoping for almost a quarter of a century the leaders of the missionary movement were overjoyed when in 1875 it was decided to send the first missionaries to Japan. The next year the Rev. A. Halmhuber of the Germany Conference, Miss Rachel Hudson, formerly on the faculty of the Millersville State Normal School in Pennsylvania, and Dr. and Mrs. Frederick Kreckler with their three children were sent to Japan to open the first mission of the Evangelical Church in the Orient. Dr. Kreckler was the son of a minister of the East Pennsylvania Conference and had been a very successful physician, when he felt called to give himself to the missionary work. He was licensed as a minister by his father's conference before he left for Japan where he became the founder of the first and most important missionary project of its kind in the history of the denomination. Unfortunately he was cut down seven years later when he contracted typhoid fever from a patient to whom he was ministering, and died April 26, 1883, just as he was prepared to do his best work.

### 63. ADVANCES IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

During this quarter of a century after 1850 the Evangelical Association made great strides in all aspects of Christian education, including the development of educational institutions and the creation of higher standards for the ministry, and the wider and more effective use of catechetical instruction and the institution of the Sunday School.

#### a. Educational Institutions

Before the turn to this period there were no educational institutions in the church and for reasons the sentiment in the church was against such schools. As late as 1855 it was decided to open institutions of higher learning but theological schools, again for reasons, were strictly forbidden. It required more than a decade to change this attitude in the church and then theological education was finally tolerated because it was felt that missionaries to the heathen should be trained somewhat in theological backgrounds.

This period marks the beginning of most of the educational institutions of the denomination. In 1852 the Pittsburgh Conference took the first steps toward establishing Albright Seminary, but it was two more years until that short-lived institution opened in Berlin, Somerset County, Pennsylvania. In 1856 this school was merged with Greensburg Seminary. After a decade this school, too, was discontinued, due to financial stress. The first permanent institution of the church was

begun at the 1854 session of the West Pennsylvania Conference when Union Seminary was projected and finally opened in New Berlin, Pennsylvania, in January, 1856.

The Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin Conferences combined their resources on January 29, 1862, to plan for a school which came to be Plainfield College the following year under the direction of the Rev. Augustine A. Smith, formerly head of the Greensburg Seminary in Ohio. In 1873 a number of the western conferences formed a compact to support a theological seminary which was soon opened as Union Biblical Institute in Naperville, Illinois, under the leadership of Bishop Reuben Yeakel. For a number of years this was the only seminary in the denomination and since 1922 it has been designated as the theological school for the conferences west of the Ohio-Pennsylvania boundary. It is now known as the Evangelical Theological Seminary. Theological subjects were offered in the eastern institutions in their regular curriculums until in 1905 a separate theological curriculum was set apart for the training of ministers in Reading, Pennsylvania, which has since come to be the Evangelical School of Theology.

Due to their conservative background there were a number of persons in the church who were opposed to higher education and sometimes tried to strengthen their cause by quoting leaders of the church like Bishops Seybert and Long as being against higher education. On numerous occasions Bishop Seybert wrote denials of such rumors and always insisted that he was in favor of learning and good schools. One such document was discovered by Rudolph Dubs and is now in the Museum of the Historical Society. In this Seybert writes:

"At the request of Daniel Kreamer, the collector of Union Seminary in New Berlin, the undersigned certifies that he is not against good schools, and that he also purposes to do something for the support of scientific culture, in case his circumstances will better warrant it."

(Signed) John Seybert.

Bishop Long also wrote similarly, sometimes even suggesting daily schedules for study for the ministers. In 1855 Long helped the Ohio Conference to purchase the Greensburg Seminary and always supported it liberally. During the hard times of the Civil War he paid the accumulated debts of the school, accepted a deed to the property, and tried to save it for the church but was forced to sell it in 1865 since he could not carry the financial load alone.

The General Conference of 1863 listed in their official record the names, assets, and number of teachers and students in the various educational institutions.<sup>42</sup> A great deal of sentiment in favor of a central university in the church was expressed at the General Conference of

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<sup>42</sup> *GCF*, 1863, p. 44.

1867 but the proposition was finally rejected because it was argued that the church was not ready for such a step and that it would undoubtedly prove injurious to the other schools already established. At the close of the fifteenth day's session at this general conference, a motion was made to open a Biblical Institute in Cleveland, Ohio, apparently designed to be the official institution of its kind in the church. The law in the church prohibiting theological seminaries had been repealed four years before. The time for adjournment came before any action could be taken on the motion. The next and last day of the conference it was voted to grant permission to found two Biblical Institutes and the rules to govern them were likewise prescribed.

As a method of properly training the children and young people of the church, the Committee on Education of the General Conference of 1863 suggested, and it was officially approved, that wherever possible congregations should establish parochial schools. Four years later the bishops continued the strong emphasis on the educational method in the episcopal address,

"What the missionary cause is for the extension of the church externally, the education of the youth is for her internal prosperity."<sup>43</sup>

That this was regarded as the high point of that address is indicated by the fact that it is the only portion of that important document which is printed in italics.

In his episcopal address to the General Conference of 1871, Bishop J. J. Esher, then the only bishop, due to the death of Bishop Long, stressed very emphatically the place of the home in Christian education. He said:

"... The efforts of the church for the religious training of the young cannot easily be over-estimated, and yet there is left to the family, this divinely appointed institution, the most sacred part of this great work. Correct discipline in the household, and faithful instruction of pious parents, may, in some instances, supply the place of schools and catechetical instructions, but nothing can supply the place of family education. A truly Christian family combines in itself the school, the Church and pastoral care; and the latter can nowhere be more successfully carried out by the minister, than in the family circle of those committed to his care. If we wish to fulfill our mission as a Church to the young, then it must be begun and strictly carried out in the family."<sup>44</sup>

This paragraph made such an impression that an appropriate action was adopted by the conference at the suggestion of the Committee on Schools and Education and the general conference four years later re-emphasized the excellent admonition.

<sup>43</sup> *GCJ*, 1863, p. 35.

<sup>44</sup> *GCJ*, 1871, p. 15.



### b. Catechetical Instruction

During this period, as in all the years from the beginning of the church, catechetical instruction was urged upon the pastors and parents and now better books for the purpose were provided. W. W. Orwig's *Catechism*, which had first appeared in 1847, was reprinted in 1860 and appeared in an English edition in 1864. The bishops regularly urged improvement in method and in diligence in this important aspect of Christian education. By 1852 the West Pennsylvania Conference drew up specific rules to be observed by the pastors in carrying on their catechetical efforts.<sup>45</sup>

Despite the fact that among certain ministers and in certain areas the catechetical method of religious instruction was not very popular, there was a constant stimulus toward such educational procedure coming from the leaders of the denomination in addresses and in articles in the church papers. Several strong articles appeared just about the close of this period,

"... there is a great want of knowledge of the elementary principles of the Christian religion existing among our youth, even among those who make a profession of religion. . . . These elementary instructions should not be given in a dogmatic or mechanical manner, but . . . adapted to the nature and capacity of the children. By pursuing such a course, children will be led, almost imperceptibly, to understand and appreciate one sublime truth of our glorious religion after another, and we shall, as a reward of our labors, behold the crowning result of the same in the conversion, and voluntary espousal of the cause of Christ."<sup>46</sup>

Were this article not specifically dated it might indeed, with reference to its description of conditions and the recommended solution, be considered a current article. An editorial in *The Evangelical Messenger* just a few years later carries on the plea,

"We notice . . . that our preachers as a body place a very high estimate upon catechetical instruction as a means of teaching the youth of the church in the principles of our holy religion and binding them to the fellowship of their own people. . . . There is a virtual acknowledgment that we have suffered great loss in the matter of intelligent, earnest, substantial piety and fixedness of Christian character by neglecting to instruct our children and youth more thoroughly in the doctrines and principles of our holy religion."<sup>47</sup>

Needless to say the inevitable result of such constant admonition as well as guidance offered to ministers in administering their educational

<sup>45</sup> Quoted in *YH* (2), p. 28.

<sup>46</sup> Charles F. Veil in *EM*, 1874, p. 201.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 1877, p. 228.

work led to the strengthening of this aspect of the work of the Evangelical Association and made for a substantial foundation for her future work.

### c. Sunday Schools

As the missionary cause had been greatly strengthened by the election of a general secretary, so the work of Christian Education was materially aided by the selection of a corresponding secretary of the Sunday School and Tract Union, upon whom rested the burden of administration. At the very close of this period, Secretary William Horn, among other things in his report to the general conference, said:

"In my judgment, the leading causes which directly affect the successful development of this holy institution, are the indifference of many of our preachers, who actually pay little or no heed to the Sunday Schools, and the lack of competent and willing teachers to teach the classes."<sup>48</sup>

This presentation of Secretary Horn provoked the conference to action. The committee on the revision of the *Discipline* brought in a lengthy recommendation which was adopted and provided that sections should be inserted in the *Discipline* setting the standard at a Sunday School in every congregation with sessions all through the year. These adoptions also clearly set forth the duties of pastors, Sunday School superintendents, officers and teachers, in administering these schools. A corresponding paragraph was also added to the duties of preachers and, in the section dealing with the quarterly conferences, it was made obligatory for the chairman to ask about the condition of the Sunday School and to receive a written report for the purpose of comparison with previous reports so as to determine the state of growth of the schools.<sup>49</sup>

From the very first appearance of *Der Christliche Botschafter* in 1836, the first regularly printed paper of the denomination, the aims and purposes of the Sunday School were clearly set forth. In the very first issue of this journal the editor, Adam Ettinger, wrote, "In the Sunday School, our children are not only separated from evil associates but are instructed in sound moral and Christian teaching." This was but one year after Sunday Schools had been officially recognized by the denomination. Two years later, in the same paper, W. W. Orwig wrote that the object of the Sunday School was to acquaint the young people with the fundamentals of the Christian religion. He felt that if they were properly managed these young people would receive in a few years more knowledge of the Bible and Church History, together with other useful learning, than many others receive throughout an entire

<sup>48</sup> *GCJ*, 1875, p. 93.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94f.

life time. So, too, S. L. Wiest in 1872 stated that the design of the Sunday Schools near the close of this period was:

"To bring children more effectually under religious influences . . . to indoctrinate children in the teachings of the Bible . . . to lead them to be true Christians . . . to develop the Christian graces implanted, to lead them on to perfection. . . They need counsel, admonition, encouragement, help on every side that they may strike root downward, grow upward and bear fruit. A symmetrical Christian character is to be built up. That which is imperfect is to be perfected: that which is superfluous is to be removed: that which is deficient is to be supplied. They are to be led on and on, to see deeper riches in Christ, greater fullness in his salvation until they come to a perfect man, according to the measure of the stature of Christ."<sup>50</sup>

Commensurate with the enlargement of aim and the improvement in methods employed came also a vast improvement of materials. The Evangelical Sunday Schools were popular places for learning the elements of the languages for these Sunday Schools existed thirty or forty years before the public schools became effective. Many poor parents who could not afford tutors depended entirely upon these schools for the education of their children. The early books used were all printed in the German language. From advertisements in the church paper and from old books recovered, it has been estimated that by 1843 the church had printed twenty-one German Sunday School books while just the year before only thirty Sunday Schools were reported.

With the appearance of *The Evangelical Messenger*, its columns, too, carried many lines stressing the work of Christian education and literature. Frequently the editors and others regretted the trashy nature of printed materials available for the reading of children and deplored the inadequate nature of the Sunday School literature and materials. Such opinions included:

"The education of our youth is to be regarded as one of the most important duties of the Christian church in our country, especially for the promotion of Christianity. It is obvious, however, that the reading of novels and other trashy literature by our youth, does not inspire the taste necessary to a moral and religious culture."<sup>51</sup>

". . . A taste for what is pure, refining, instructive, and elevating in literature, music, art, and science must be cultivated. What is strictly denominational religious reading and teaching, has a most important work to perform, in this matter; but other things also must be employed as assistance . . . the taste and desire for these must be formed in a great measure. There is an imperative demand to supply the young with attractive reading, such as will interest and at the same

<sup>50</sup> *The Living Epistle*, 1872, p. 343.

<sup>51</sup> *EM*, 1869, p. 85.



time do good to the heart and the intellect. We need history, biography, travel, literature and science, in a cheap and attractive form, that it may be easily accessible to all classes of the people: nor should the effects of music be ignored. And in addition, the active efforts of all the friends of humanity and religion should be aroused, so that the demand for this pernicious literature should be overcome by the desire and requirement of something better." <sup>52</sup>

Improvements soon took place in the quality of the materials used in these Sunday Schools. In the quadrennium from 1863 to 1867 alone twenty-three different Sunday School books, with a total of 14,566,415 pages, were published by the Evangelical Press, and at the 1867 session it was reported that twenty more manuscripts were in the hands of the printers with three additional shorter ones appropriate for tracts. Regular papers for the children of the Sunday Schools were provided in German and English.

The high ideals and standards set for the Sunday School literature at the close of this very fruitful period in Christian education are shown clearly in another article from one well acquainted with the field:

"The avowed object of Sunday School literature is to teach the religion of Christ, and by its general influences to so cultivate the minds and hearts of children, that they may become pure in their religious faith."

Then he goes on to express dissatisfaction with the current materials and urges the publishers of all denominations to strive to produce a literature

"which will be in harmony with her great work of saving the people and building them up in the truth as it is in Jesus." <sup>53</sup>

By 1873 the International Lessons came into use and the church papers began to publish comments on the Sunday School lessons. In 1875 the Evangelical Press began to issue lesson helps for the newly adopted International Lessons. The days of the old method of the random selection of Scripture Lessons was gone. Questions Books, A B C books and Primers, Spellers, and Bible Readers were laid aside and Biblical instruction came to be the accepted method of study in the Sunday School. Other new features which were introduced for the first time into the Sunday School during this period included Teachers' Meetings, Normal Classes, plans for orders of service, Children's Day, and special instruction in missions and temperance. Liberal emphasis was laid upon the continuous meeting of the Sunday School throughout

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 1871, p. 386.

<sup>53</sup> *EM*, 1873, p. 36.

the entire year. In fact by 1875 the Sunday School was considered almost universally as important as the prayer meeting.<sup>54</sup>

Closely related to the objectives of Christian education is the advance during this period in the music and hymnody of the church. It was a long way from the informal singing of hymns at family devotions or one of the early class meetings to the singing of choirs in a somewhat formal service of worship, but this transformation actually took place in some sections of the church during this short period and in others over a longer period of years.

"Criticisms aimed at the choirs were usually spoken because they had a tendency to cause the congregation to listen instead of joining in the singing. Others felt that choirs destroyed the spirituality of a service."<sup>55</sup>

The place of music in the church service was never disputed in the Evangelical Association although musical instruments at times and choirs generally came in for their share of criticism. During this period an excellent appeal for a proper arrangement of the music in a service of worship appeared in *The Evangelical Messenger*,

"The hymn should be such as will be in perfect accord with the thoughts and feelings of the occasion. If the discourse be of a solemn nature, the sentiment of the hymn selected should add to that solemnity, and not be of a lively turn. If the sermon is to elevate the soul to hope and to joyfulness, funeral hymns are out of place; the heart thus lifted up must inspire the tongue to strains of joyful exultation. . .

"The hymn selected should be devotional. In all hymn books are found hymns that are partly if not wholly didactic, and, in the main, unfitted for the devotions of a people. . . . The hymn should likewise be congregational in its character, not personal. Many hymns both by their form and contents, are adapted only for individual use. The condition they represent is, perhaps, that of but few in the congregation. The rest find it a violence to their feeling to unite in singing its sentiments."<sup>56</sup>

The Pittsburgh Conference passed a resolution near the close of this period suggesting that training in music should be encouraged, and where other suitable houses for the purpose could not be obtained, the churches should be opened for well and orderly regulated singing schools.<sup>57</sup> So, even though the Evangelical Association was very slow in developing the natural relation between religion and other forms of

<sup>54</sup> For a more complete discussion of the development of the Sunday School movement in this period see chapters III and IV in Albright, R. W., and Leedy, R. B., *"A Story of Religious Education in the Evangelical Church,"* Cleveland, 1932.

<sup>55</sup> *EM*, 1869, p. 353.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 1869, p. 12.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 1869, p. 101.

culture, the time had come when her leaders recognized the impoverishment which she and her people had suffered through this neglect. All efforts were consequently expended to make use of those forms of culture which would help members most effectively to develop a rich religious experience and to prosecute the work which they felt impelled to do for the cause of Christianity.

## 64. SOCIAL AND PERSONAL ISSUES

### a. Slavery

In the middle of this important period in the history of the Evangelical Association the country was severely torn by the questions of slavery and national solidarity which provoked much interest and discussion in the bodies of the church concerning slavery and war. During the decade preceding the Civil War the Evangelical Conferences joined the other American churches in passing anti-slavery resolutions. From its first years the church carried articles in the *Discipline* forbidding members to own or sell slaves. As the crisis grew more tense they added the strong auxiliary phrase, "under any pretense or condition whatever."

Even before the firing of the opening gun on Fort Sumter the editors of the church papers published articles predicting the struggle and strongly denouncing war and slavery, the evil which was about to cause it. With the actual outbreak came division of opinion regarding participation in war and the support of the government on the one hand and the emancipation of the slaves and what to do with them when freed on the other. *The Evangelical Messenger* especially carried many strong articles.<sup>58</sup> These editors sensed the serious problem of assimilating the freed colored people and at one time the editor of *The Evangelical Messenger* even allowed his name to be stigmatized somewhat as a supporter of slavery because he faced this problem honestly. One writer went so far as to suggest "colonizing the freed African population." Wrote another:

"The question of slavery, we trust, will be solved by the successful termination of the war. . . . Slavery is the essential cause—the original bitter root from which the present state of rebellion has sprung; and the American people cannot afford to pour out rivers of blood and waste boundless treasure, merely for the sake of retaining in their midst a system which is inimical to their free institutions, and which has already cost too dearly."<sup>59</sup>

In the very midst of the Civil War the general conference met in its thirteenth session in Buffalo, New York, and with a division of opinion prevalent it was forced to take a stand on the crucial issues before the country. The division of opinion caused the committee on the state of

<sup>58</sup> *EM*, 1861, pp. 4, 21, 156.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 1862, p. 60.



the church to bring before the conference a majority and minority report. The majority report, with revisions, was adopted. Its general tone may be seen from the first resolution:

"That notwithstanding our conviction that war and bloodshed is a terrible evil, and the extremely deplorable consequence of sin, in opposition to the spirit of Christianity, and its existence to be deeply deplored in our so-called Christian land; . . . it is the holiest duty of every citizen, faithfully to support the Government in the important duties devolving upon the same."<sup>60</sup>

The minority report of this committee was also entered upon the record of the general conference although supported by only four votes. It was a milder statement and differed from the majority report primarily in avoiding any commitment regarding the Emancipation Proclamation which had been favored by eight members of the committee of nine. This minority report was also, however, consistent with the *Discipline* in abhorring slavery and war.

By the time of the fourteenth session of the general conference held in 1867, the war was over and the slaves had been freed—and all at a terrible cost. President Lincoln was dead. Of the 2,859,132 men in the Union Army alone, 67,058 had been killed and 292,410 had died in hospitals or prison camps. The federal government had expended \$6,189,929,900. The bishops expressed great joy that the struggle was over and the general conference decided once more to try to establish missions among the colored people of the south. This venture never proved successful just as the work in the slave states before the war had always proved unsuccessful. Consequently to this day the Evangelical Church is confined almost exclusively to the Northern and Western states.

### b. Secret Societies

Strong petitions were brought to the General Conference of 1871 reopening the old issue of secret societies. These leaders clearly recognized a division of opinion in their own body as well as throughout the laity and ministry of the church and so very cleverly prevented the precipitation of any divisive feeling in the matter by deciding that their body or any other had no right to change the requirements for membership in the church. The majority report, supported by more than three-fourths of the conference, also included a section advising preachers and laymen to keep aloof from such oath-bound societies and another forbidding the laying of church corner-stones by officers of secret societies according to their ritual. The minority report differed only in omitting the advice to laymen and ministers in the second article.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>60</sup> *G.C.J.*, 1863, p. 59f.

<sup>61</sup> *G.C.J.*, 1871, p. 83.

## c. Marriage and the Family

From the first appearance of George Miller's *Practical Christianity* in 1814 the church had placed great emphasis upon the most ideal relations between the members of the family in the Christian home. During the period under our consideration this emphasis was maintained at a high level with editorials in all the papers and official pronouncements by many conferences. Crime waves were attributed to poor home training and parents were urged to keep the family altar for regular home worship as a proper basis and background for the happiness and righteousness of their children. Apparently some of the members of the church were becoming financially well-to-do for one of the bishops as late as 1872 wrote a strong appeal for conservatism in dress and expenditures for homes and personal comforts. He particularly urged the women to avoid the wearing of jewelry and in general urged the church membership to avoid all appearance of pride and worldly affection.<sup>62</sup> Another writer discussing the power and proper use of money wrote a very clear analysis and concluded wisely,

"The mightiest passions are involved in it. And as a man spends so is he."<sup>63</sup>

*The Living Epistle* was particularly rich in its contributions about ideal home and family life in 1875 and 1876. Articles appeared here describing the parent-child relationships in almost the same sound manner set forth by George Miller sixty years before showing particularly the duties of parents to children and the duties and respect due to parents from their children. Among other things parents were enjoined not to be constant scolds.<sup>64</sup>

But the homes of the Evangelical Association were not entirely free from broken relationships due to irregularities and incompatible attitudes. Marriage has never been considered a sacrament by the church but has always been counted sacred. The first legislation against divorce appeared in 1867:

"Marriage being divinely instituted is *sacred* and during the life time of the couple, according to divine authority, indissoluble, except in the single case of adultery. Hence we disapprove decidedly of those frivolous marriages, divorces, and re-marriages for trivial causes so prevalent in our day, as sins against human nature, society and the order of God."<sup>65</sup>

This rule not only forbade divorce on all grounds save adultery but also forbade all ministers to marry any divorcees save those divorced on

<sup>62</sup> CB, December 11, 1872.

<sup>63</sup> EM, 1871, p. 251.

<sup>64</sup> *The Living Epistle*, 1875, pp. 352ff, 452; 1876, p. 78.

<sup>65</sup> GCJ, 1867, p. 73.

grounds of adultery. The concluding paragraph of this report of the committee which had dealt with these important personal problems is an excellent exhortation:

"In conclusion we would direct all our members to the condition of their membership in our church, as laid down in our *Discipline*, namely: that they avoid all manner of evil and do all manner of good; and in order to accomplish this to seek full salvation from sin and the perfect love of God in this life and diligently and faithfully make use of the means of grace, as: the reading and hearing of God's word, secret and public prayer, attendance at prayer and class-meetings, and the sacraments, that they may grow in grace, and honor their profession, Christ and the Church, and be a light of the world, a salt of the earth, and a blessing to their generation. . . ." <sup>66</sup>

During this period the Rev. John Kleinfelter had an unusual experience in that he married Sarah Caroline Funk to Cornelius Achy in 1855 without ascertaining the exact age of the bride. He soon discovered that the bride was a minor and had not obtained the consent of her father who pressed suit against Kleinfelter in the Lebanon County courts in which county the ceremony had been performed. According to the law, Kleinfelter was subject to a fine of fifty pounds or about \$250. The Historical Society has the receipt and release which Kleinfelter obtained from Mr. Funk after settlement had been made at the figure of \$110. This was just 10% more than the salary Kleinfelter received that year as a minister of the church.

#### d. Personal Habits

The users of alcoholic liquors and tobacco came in for their share of criticism during this quarter of a century and numerous articles appeared in the church papers describing vividly the evil effects of the habits upon the individual and the family. The General Conference of 1871 reasserted that the official position of the church was total abstinence from alcoholic beverages. Due to the fact that it had been discovered that different adulterated and alcoholic liquors had been used in the celebration of the holy communion in some places, this conference also advised all societies "to use only the pure juice of the grape for this holy purpose." <sup>67</sup>

Apparently previous rules against the use of tobacco among ministers were not proving entirely effective for it was necessary for the General Conference of 1859 to pass a regulation forbidding the use of tobacco in the conference room. Six years later the general body discouraged the use of tobacco among all members and urged all ministers to use

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<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *GCJ*, 1871, p. 80.



their influence against it. The vote on this action was seventy-two yeas and nine nays.<sup>68</sup>

### e. Amusements

At the beginning of the last quarter of the nineteenth century the Evangelical Association was still largely a rural church. With rustic environment and habits it was very difficult for these people to sense or sanction the methods of city life. There was especially much misunderstanding of the motives underlying certain types of amusement. Although they recognized the danger of granting an opening wedge to various types of questionable amusements, the General Conference of 1867 allowed that picnics, excursions and similar festivities may be excusable if properly and religiously guarded and conducted. This legislation was all the more remarkable because of a negative attitude toward these matters expressed in the episcopal message that year.

Numerous annual conferences also expressed themselves as opposed to the apparently increasing gaiety and frivolity of the amusements and recreation of the times, especially to festivals in the churches. The church papers carried editorials and some well written contributed articles on this subject. One such writer disapproved of wasting time at parties as he knew them for he thought the entertainments engaged in were "unworthy of the attention of an intellectual, much less an immortal being."<sup>69</sup>

These leaders and writers did not propose a negative philosophy. An article under the heading "Home Amusements" states the position of many in that day:

"What we need at this moment is more home amusements, home training and culture; and until fathers and mothers can be convinced of the necessity for these requisites, and urged to the adoption of them, the carnival of dissipation and crime will not abate, the young will go astray as they are now doing, and people will hold up their hands in horror at the degeneracy of the age. The youth of the United States go to perdition more frequently from neglect at home than from any other cause. . . . We venture to assert that if half the parents in the United States would give their attention, for the next ten years, to home amusements for their children—amusements which should involve healthful, rational enjoyment—the coming generation would be stronger men and women than those of any preceding generation."<sup>70</sup>

Sometimes, too, the unapproved amusements were criticized on the point of their extravagance, especially those involving elaborate settings for parties. The frugality of most of these people caused them to be very careful regarding expenditures not only for ornaments of dress but also regarding such matters as recreation, rivalry in building beautiful

<sup>68</sup> *GCI*, 1867, p. 65.

<sup>69</sup> *EM*, 1871, p. 90.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 1870, p. 234.

churches, and even funerals. Costly funerals were discouraged<sup>71</sup> and one writer actually used economy as a major argument for cremation, together with an aesthetic appeal for it.<sup>72</sup>

## 65. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Long before the Civil War the appointments south of the Mason Dixon Line suffered serious losses because of the anti-slavery attitude of the church. The outbreak of the war had an immediate disastrous effect upon the work in Virginia; all the appointments in the Shenandoah Valley, founded in the first years of the church, and others in the south were lost to the denomination in 1861. Only a few congregations, on the Berkley Springs charge in West Virginia, remain as remnants of this once successful work.

Evidently the statistics before 1875 must have been somewhat inaccurate at best, for the conference this year ordered the publisher to print statistical blanks for all conferences to make possible more uniform and more accurate statements regarding the status of the church. During these twenty-five years the church had grown from a membership of about 20,000 to 95,253, which represented a net gain of 19,062 during the last quadrennium, or since 1871. In 1875 there were also 1,339 ministers, 1,233 churches, 1,509 Sunday Schools with 90,090 pupils, and 509 catechetical classes with 6,186 catechumens. The fifteen or twenty years after the Civil War were years of remarkable growth in the Evangelical Association in every branch of the work, and have since then been unequalled in this respect.

Like the 1840's a generation before, the 1870's were years of building new churches. New wealth had been accumulated and city congregations desired to worship in beautiful church buildings like their neighbors of other denominations. These and other related causes led to the erection of more elaborate houses of worship. Such progressive congregations also had their critics who frequently denounced such expenditures as extravagance in no uncertain terms in the church papers.<sup>73</sup> Not much time had been given as yet to the study of church architecture and so most of the buildings were practical rather than churchly in design, although, here and there, there were beautiful exceptions.

So, too, there was little improvement in the services of worship during this period. Choirs had indeed been introduced into some of the city churches but were by no means generally approved. Occasionally even the bishops in their episcopal addresses warned the church against allowing the services of worship to become too formal. The very criticism of these tendencies, however, is proof of their prevalence.

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<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 1871, p. 386.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 1874, p. 268.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 1871, pp. 100, 284.

## CHAPTER VIII

### GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT—1875-1891

By the turn to the last quarter of the nineteenth century the Evangelical Association was well established and its doctrines and polity rather firmly fixed. Considering its inauspicious beginning, it is the more remarkable that in these seventy-five years the influence of this church should have spread so widely that at the beginning of 1875 it numbered 95,234 members and 836 regular itinerant preachers. The next four quadrenniums were to prove to be its most fruitful period of growth and no one can estimate how its numbers and influence might have developed to the present had not a most unfortunate divisive spirit caused dissension and finally a break in the ranks. The form and polity of the church were so completely developed that little constructive legislation appears on the records of the four sessions of the general conference of this period. The wider educational background of the clergy reflected itself in the more numerous books and theological articles which appeared from their pens. This period also marks the formation of the Woman's Missionary Society and the Young People's Alliance in the general church and their branches in each of the annual conferences. Yet despite the internal dissension the membership and ministry grew about fifty per cent during this brief period of sixteen years. By 1891 the membership had grown from 95,253 to 150,234, a gain of 54,981, and 391 ministers had been added to the itinerant rolls raising that total from 836 to 1,227.

Apparently the leaders of the denomination were very alert to sense the opportunity for growth on the far flung and rapidly expanded frontiers of the church. Numerous references and analytical tables of growth in membership in the quadrennial minutes of the general conference, especially those of 1879, indicate the care with which these general officers watched and encouraged the development of the youthful church. In one instance the bishops reported the results of a study of five quadrenniums in their episcopal address. All through these years the question of conducting services in both the German and English languages continued to be a major problem. Young people spoke the English exclusively and their elders desired the continuation of the language of the fathers. The bishops inserted a paragraph in their episcopal address as late as 1879<sup>1</sup> urging that all groups should be reasonable and try to provide services in both languages wherever possible, in order to avoid offense to anyone.

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<sup>1</sup> *GCI*, 1879, p. 25.



At regular intervals during these years the bishops called attention to the rising standards for the men entering the ministry of the church. Now that schools of higher learning were established, the necessity of an adequate educational background for the work of the ministry received its proportionate share of emphasis, but always, quite properly, by the side of the devotional and spiritual qualifications essential to the life and work of the minister. Frequently the leaders of the church were forced to admit, as in 1879,<sup>2</sup> that by no means had the qualifications of the ministry risen high enough to meet the demands and requirements of the great tasks lying before the church. In spite of the ever enlarging responsibilities of the ministers in an increasingly industrialized and pagan society there remained a warm friendly feeling among the clergy of the Evangelical Association much akin to a family spirit.

#### 66. A FRUITFUL PERIOD OF PUBLICATION

The increasing emphasis upon institutions of higher learning and the more adequate academic training for ministers naturally led to reading on a wider scale, to constructive study, and to serious writing on the part of the Evangelical ministers. In a goodly number of instances their writings were published in periodicals, magazines and books.

The discussion regarding Christian perfection, once so freely indulged, claimed but little attention in this period. The issue had been practically closed in the previous period by the emphatic re-statement of the official position of the denomination. As an echo of these preceding years or perhaps even as a climax to the struggles of the past, there appeared several volumes more or less specifically on the subject, all supporting the official position of the denomination as outlined in the book of *Discipline*. In 1882 the Rev. H. J. Bowman compiled the opinions of the leaders of the denomination from the beginning on this much discussed question, and caused them to be published in Cleveland, under the title, *Voices on Holiness from the Evangelical Association*. In this same year W. W. Orwig had twenty-five sermons printed by the Evangelical Press in which he touched on the same subject, concerning which he had written more elaborately just ten years before in his book entitled *Die Heilsfülle*. One other volume in this field deserves mention, Jesse Yeakel's *Die Heiligung des Menschen* which appeared in Cleveland in 1885 and represented the summary opinions of this conservative, evangelistic presiding elder of the East Pennsylvania Conference. Esher's catechisms, which appeared in the years 1882, 1883 and 1889, also included a statement on this subject.

The church was becoming more and more conscious of the fact that to preserve its denominational consciousness and the fine spirit, once

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17f.

so predominant in the church, it would be necessary to educate both the laity and the clergy in the backgrounds and development of the church. Accordingly much encouragement was given those who sought to publish the results of their research in these fields, and some were selected and assigned specific tasks to accomplish these ends. Carl G. Koch, editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*, published on the Evangelical Press in 1871 an account of his experiences, under the title *Lebenserfahrungen*. Under assignment by the general conference, Bishop Reuben Yeakel translated and edited the *Lives of Jacob Albright, George Miller, John Walter and John Dreisbach*, compiled in part by George Miller. This work appeared in Cleveland in 1879 in German under the title *Albrecht und seine Mit-arbeiter*, and four years later was printed in English as *Jacob Albright and His Co-Laborers*. In order to give the denomination a vivid picture of the widely extended frontiers of the church, the publishing house issued Bishop Esher's account of his missionary trip around the world under the title, *Über Länder und Meere* (Over Lands and Seas) in Cleveland in 1886. S. C. Breyfogel translated and edited the minutes of the sessions of the general conference from the beginning to 1887, and included in his volume, *Evangelical Landmarks*, which appeared in Reading, Pennsylvania, in 1888, a summary of the minutes of the East Pennsylvania Conference from 1840 to 1887, together with a table of statistics and the lists of ministers of the denomination. This work has through the years proved to be an invaluable source book, and is still widely used. In 1888, Bishop S. P. Spreng's *Life and Labors of John Seybert* appeared in Cleveland. Bishop Spreng had access to the *Journal* of Bishop Seybert and also the excellent biography of Seybert done by Solomon Neitz in 1862. In 1891 a historical committee was appointed at the suggestion of Reuben Yeakel and each annual conference was instructed to gather historical material and encouraged to write the story of its own life and activities.<sup>3</sup>

The practical aspects of the ministry and lay leadership in the church were not neglected in this period. In 1877 W. W. Orwig published a work called *Pastoral-Theologie* designed to give practical instruction to the ministers of the church. More especially designed for lay study was the ten-volume set known as the Evangelical Normal Series which was largely compiled and edited by P. W. Raidabaugh in 1884-5. The wide range of subjects covered in these volumes include (1) *Lesson Outlines*, (2) *Introduction to the Books of the Bible*, (3) *Sacred Geography*, (4) *Book of Chronology*, (5) *Biblical Antiquities*, (6) *Church History*, (7) *Divine Origin of the Bible*, (8) *History of the English Bible*, (9) *Natural History of the Bible*, and (10) *Modes and*

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<sup>3</sup> GCJ, 1891, p. 136.

*Methods of Sunday School Work.* The ninth volume was written by the Rev. Ammon Stapleton and the tenth by the Rev. U. F. Swengel. The value of this series in the training of lay leaders and more especially workers and teachers in the Sunday Schools is inestimable.

The more technically theological or philosophical works from the hands of Evangelical ministers were fewer in number but significant. In 1871 *Eine Abhandlung über die Christliche Taufe*, by Johannes Köhl, was published in Cleveland, and was a conservative interpretation of the meaning of Christian baptism. Although millennialism of various sorts never got a strong grip upon the thinkers in the Evangelical Church, there were some who gave it serious consideration as is indicated by the book of the Rev. J. Kächele, once of Reutlingen, Germany, and later a minister in this country. This work which was published in two parts by the Evangelical Press at Stuttgart in 1883 was entitled, *Die Zeichen der Zeit und ihre Bedeutung*. (The Signs of the Times and Their Significance). It was an attempt to interpret the good and evil signs of the times, with a none too optimistic outlook for the present world in the approaching millennial era. The Rev. Joseph Harlacher, a man very little appreciated, but of unusual missionary ability and zeal, was the author of the volume entitled, *Das Neue Jerusalem* (The New Jerusalem), which appeared in Cleveland in 1888. In his clear treatment on the nature of the church, the author writes what those of an ecumenical mind will appreciate:

" . . . the church of Christ is not localized anywhere on earth, nor does it exist exclusively in any church organization. . . . There is no one sect or denomination to which one must go to pray to God, nor is God to be found only in one sect or denomination."<sup>4</sup>

Quite likely the clearest thinker and best theological writer of this period was the Rev. Dr. Anton Hülster, professor in Northwestern College in Naperville. Two outstanding works of his appeared during these years, *Die Seelenlehre* in 1876 and *Die Christliche Glaubenslehre* in 1888. The former had been presented to the general conference and the Board of Publication as a book on psychology but when it appeared in print it was entitled *The Doctrine of the Soul*, which probably was counted more discreet in those days when science and religion were not considered companionable bed-fellows. This was the first work of its kind printed in this country and by twenty years preceded Starbuck's *Psychology of Religion*. The body of the work remained unchanged however and to this day is the finest work of its kind ever printed by the denomination. The first book deals with the anthropological presuppositions lying in the background of his thesis. In the

<sup>4</sup> Harlacher, Joseph, *Das Neue Jerusalem*, Cleveland, 1888, p. 19.



second and third books, which form the main body of his work, Doctor Hülster traces and outlines the nature of man and the soul through intelligence, emotion and will and shows their significance for religious experience even to a concluding paragraph on immortality. His *Glaubenslehre*<sup>5</sup> was not printed by the Evangelical Press but in Cincinnati in 1888. No reason is apparent for this, save that possibly his previous work may not have been counted sufficiently orthodox to permit the printing of his further works. This latter work appeared during those years when the denomination was offering \$1,000 for the manuscript of a "Systematic Theology" which the Board of Publication would find acceptable. Apparently this work may have been entered in this contest but not found to be satisfactory. Bishop Escher's *Christliche Theologie*, which between 1899 and 1901 appeared in three volumes, was the next extensive work on theology printed by the denomination and apparently the one for which the prize was awarded if the contest continued beyond the division in 1891. Theological topics comprised a goodly proportion of the articles appearing in *The Evangelical Messenger* and *Der Christliche Botschafter* during this period, especially in the earlier years before their pages were given over to the issues which finally divided the church. Among the valuable contributors to these columns was Dr. Anton Hülster. Space does not permit a more detailed analysis of the theological trends in the church at this time, but it must be said that Dr. Hülster was one of the fine minds of the church and rendered the church a real service.

The publishing house of the denomination was doing a very excellent business. In 1887 a new addition was built and the entire structure was free of debt. During the preceding quadrennium the business transacted reached the total of \$804,319.62, representing an increase of \$40,311.84.<sup>6</sup> The profits of the publishing house were distributed among the various conferences of the church. The basis of this distribution was established in 1883 when the general conference arranged that the first half of the publishing profits should be distributed equally among the annual conferences in North America and the second half should be distributed among the same conferences but on the basis of the business turned into the house from these conferences.<sup>7</sup> The power of the Board of Publication increased rapidly through the years because of its strong financial position and because of the carefully selected leaders on the board. In 1891 the general conference referred all unfinished business to the Board of Publication.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> For a complete bibliography of Evangelical Press imprints see Appendix H.

<sup>6</sup> YR, p. 230.

<sup>7</sup> GCJ, 1883.

<sup>8</sup> GCJ, 1891, p. 147.

## 67. A GROWING EDUCATIONAL EMPHASIS

The period leading up to the last decade of the nineteenth century marks an ever increasing appreciation of the value of a richly cultured life and an attempt on the part of the leaders of the Evangelical Association to lead their members into this enriching experience through a better program of education in the church, the Sunday School, and the home. Preachers admitted that they had not used the catechisms provided by the church as faithfully as they might have done. Conference after conference during these years called the ministers to a more faithful application of the catechetical method.

Occasionally laymen dared to write articles for the church papers asking that the leaders of the church provide better preachers. The complaint of these laymen was that the ministers lacked culture and education, were slovenly in dress, appearance and manner, indolent and negligent in calling upon their parishioners.<sup>9</sup>

In response to these articles by laymen, ministers frequently answered that the church had not provided the opportunity for the adequate training of the clergy, and that too many duties devolved upon the ministers so that there was no time for study. It was suggested that the laity might support the work of the church more generously so that fields of labor could be divided and each minister have fewer responsibilities. By 1869 *The Evangelical Messenger* carried articles under the titles, "Poor Pay—Poor Preach" and "Good Pay—Good Preach." These were not threats to withhold the best that any minister might do in the hope that salaries might be increased. These articles clearly pointed out that by giving ministers more time for study, the local congregations would be serving themselves best. It may be said the Evangelical Church still suffers in this same way, and that many capable ministers through a multiplicity of duties are deprived of adequate time for sermon preparation.

During these years several conferences tried to remedy this evident weakness by setting salary standards for the various orders of the ministry and by constantly raising the standard for admission to the ministry.

The second attempt of the church to lift its membership to a richer cultural and spiritual level was made in the Sunday Schools of the church. No one failed to recognize the great opportunity for doing good in these schools, but so few were adequately trained to teach. Many articles called attention to this weakness and the need for better teachers.

"The great object of the Sunday School centers around the lesson—the thorough teachings of its truths. How often it is deplored by able

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<sup>9</sup> *EM*, 1874, p. 297; 1869, p. 184; 1885, p. 513.

workers that so little real thorough teaching is done! On the other hand comes back the reply, 'We are doing our best.'"<sup>10</sup>

The General Conference of 1879 very frankly faced this serious problem of the proper religious training of the young people. Just four years before the major emphasis of the general body was upon the world outlook and the establishment of the Oriental mission. Now once again the attention of that legislative group was turned to the intensive study of the possibilities of the church at home. This conference of 1879 ordered that a new catechism, written by Professor A. Hülster and designed particularly for use in Sunday Schools, should be printed in both the German and the English languages. They also stressed the wider distribution of the Sunday School papers, and urged the publication of a German Biblical Geography. Throughout the church a number of pastors had established normal classes for Sunday School teachers. This practise was commended by the general conference and the editors of the Sunday School literature were ordered to prepare and publish a course of study for such normal classes.<sup>11</sup> This action was repeated by the General Conference of 1883 and ten volumes appeared in 1884-5 under the editorship of P. W. Raidabaugh which helped materially to provide a more proper background for teachers in the Sunday Schools. Persons who completed this prescribed course of study received a certificate of graduation signed by the teachers of the class and the editors of the German and English Sunday School literature.<sup>12</sup>

At the very close of this period, even in the midst of a great controversy, the General Conference of 1891 did not forget its great responsibility for the advancement of the work of Christian education. That body specified the duties of a preacher and Christian parents for the instruction of youth.

"It shall be the duty of every preacher to hold catechetical instruction, at least during six months of the conference years, in every society on his field of labor. The two year's course of instruction shall be so arranged as to embrace the whole of the 'Smaller Catechism of the Evangelical Association' in one year; except on fields of labor where this is impracticable on account of too great a number of societies, a two years' course shall be provided for. Should the preacher find it impossible to attend to teaching the catechetical classes, he may appoint some suitable person thereto, however, under his supervision.

"It shall be the duty of our members to send their children, who have attained the age of ten years, to catechetical instruction at least one year, or until the preacher shall consider them sufficiently advanced to be dismissed from further attendance.

<sup>10</sup> *EM*, March 8, 1881.

<sup>11</sup> *GCJ*, 1879, p. 44.

<sup>12</sup> *GCJ*, 1883, p. 65.



"At the completion of the course of instruction an examination of the catechumens shall be held in the presence of the society. This examination shall be a review of the principal portions of the catechism, and shall consist of between fifty and sixty questions. It shall not be allowed to require the children to take upon themselves any vows, neither the laying on of hands.

"It shall be left to the conscientious judgment of the preacher, whether the catechumens have made sufficient progress to entitle them to take part in the examination in the presence of the society; in case they have not, they shall not be permitted to do so, but shall be required to attend further instructions.

"This examination shall have no connection with receiving persons as members into our church, rules for the reception of members being given at the proper place."<sup>13</sup>

Such clear statements as these would lead the casual reader to believe that the major emphasis of the denomination at this time was upon the educational method. This can hardly be said to have been the case. Many of the leaders of the church felt that it should constantly be a major emphasis, as, indeed, the records from the beginning have indicated. However, during the closing decades of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth, there were many pastors who completely neglected these educational opportunities. Perhaps that is the reason so much was done by way of regulation at the sessions of general conference. Fortunately for the growth and welfare of the denomination, this major educational emphasis, which guided the thinking of the leaders of the denomination from the beginning, has become the commonly accepted and widely current practice of today.

This educational approach was even carried down to the home and to the parents of children going to Sunday Schools. For many years the committee of the general conference which dealt with these problems was called the committee on "Family, Sunday School, and Instruction of Youth." It was very fitting, indeed, that these two closely related agencies should have their common responsibilities thus bound together and expressed through the voice of one committee of the highest body in the church.

This committee in 1883 specifically stated that it is the duty of Christian parents to have the proper conception of the relation of their children to the Kingdom of God and the church. After stating that children belong to God, the report continues,

"This fact Christian parents should always hold in view, and, in accordance therewith, consecrate their little ones through prayer and baptism early to the Lord, and train them for God and the Church;

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<sup>13</sup> *GCJ*, 1891, p. 126f.

and in this training make upon the susceptible minds the impression that they belong to God so *emphatic, that it can never be erased.*"<sup>14</sup>

At this conference session and at the one four years later, this committee wrote into its reports a clear statement of fact that not all the homes of the church were of the right type and that they should be improved to further the interests of the church and the Kingdom of God. Particularly strong were the pronouncements against those elements which break into and disrupt the home. The sacredness of marriage vows was stressed and, at three successive general conference sessions, divorce was forbidden on any save scriptural grounds and all ministers were advised to refuse to marry any divorcees except those divorced on Scriptural grounds.<sup>15</sup>

## 68. MORAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES CHALLENGE THE CHURCH

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, which marked the rapid rise of capitalism and the formation of large corporations, the Evangelical Association tried to provide help for laborers and guidance for employers, so that the God-given rights of the common people would be preserved. One of the points at issue was the observance of Sunday. Time and again business men told their employees that it was necessary for the laborers to work on Sunday. The church urged all its members to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy, to refuse the bribe of double pay for working on Sunday, and to observe the day in a becoming manner. Loud and noisy picnics, visitations and amusements were discouraged. In each case the precepts called for the observance of a "holy day" and not a "holiday."<sup>16</sup>

These church people were consistent. Occasionally persons would travel many miles to attend camp meetings on Sunday. Such exhausting travel was discouraged and members were enjoined to arrive at such meetings on Saturday and leave on Monday. Purchases of any sort, even food and the necessities of life, were forbidden at the camp meetings on Sundays and similar strict observance of Sunday was common in the homes of these people.<sup>17</sup>

These convictions concerning the strict observance of the Lord's Day were carried to their logical conclusion when the General Conference of 1891 requested the managers of the World's Fair, which was to be held in Chicago in 1893, not to open their doors on Sundays.<sup>18</sup> The

<sup>14</sup> *GCJ*, 1883, p. 65.

<sup>15</sup> *GCJ*, 1887, p. 94.

<sup>16</sup> Article, *The Sabbath and the Workman*, *EM*, March 1, 1881.

<sup>17</sup> *GCJ*, 1883, p. 78f.

<sup>18</sup> *GCJ*, 1891, p. 87.

position of many of the members of the Evangelical Church to this day may well be expressed in the closing paragraph of the report of the committee on Sabbath to the General Conference of 1883,

"As we value Christianity, as we appreciate the importance of instructing the people therein, as we desire the physical and spiritual well being of all, as we cherish a pure morality, as we pray for the blessings of the Gospel, let us unitedly and with unswerving fidelity maintain the sacredness of the day of rest."<sup>19</sup>

Closely related to the question of the proper use of the Lord's Day is the matter of amusements which may be rightly enjoyed by Christians. Roller skating had become very popular by 1885, but the leaders of the Evangelical Association roundly condemned such enjoyment as "wasting the time, ruinous to the health and destructive to the soul." Many of the annual conferences East and West took action resolving to warn the people, especially the young, against the evil of roller-skating rinks.

Church sociables received no warmer reception in the '80's or gay '90's. Official actions and private opinions expressed in printed articles condemned socials with games, plays and charades, as silly nonsense and as destroyers of the spiritual life. Here and there arose a defender of such social gatherings, but the most ardent defenses stated that here and there a church social may be an exception to the rule in its good effects, but, if so, it is because it is exceptionally well governed and conducted. One writer put it,

"We by no means denounce the development of the social element in a congregation for it is but in keeping with the very nature of a state of grace in Christ Jesus; but this social element has ample room for its widest exercise in connection with the regular services of the church, and in other natural channels, if the occasion is only properly improved. Pure Christian sociability waits not for special "socials" but shows itself in every day life, and whenever it comes in contact with those who seem to need its ministry."<sup>20</sup>

Although most of the members of the Evangelical Association came of European stock which was accustomed to the drinking of alcoholic liquors, the denomination, as we have seen in the previous chapters, maintained a high standard of temperance from the beginning. The members who lived in this period followed the high standards of their elders. With the greater commercializing of the saloons and the wider advertising of liquors, the leaders of the church became more cautious than ever and warned young and old alike. One writer denounced the

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<sup>19</sup> *G.C.J.*, 1883, p. 79.

<sup>20</sup> *EM*, 1885, p. 344; 1871, p. 90; 1874, p. 102.



"Free Lunches" in saloons as severe temptations to drink with the rest and warned all members to refrain from eating at such places.<sup>21</sup>

Much more modern was the approach of the Rev. B. H. Niebel to this problem. He, like many other ministers of his day, placed upon the parents the major responsibility for guiding children toward sobriety and added that the Sunday School must indeed assume the responsibility for giving such guidance to many who may receive no help from other sources.<sup>22</sup> The general attitude of the denomination was emphatically expressed by many individuals and annual conferences who commended men in public office for opposing the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors and frequently expressed themselves as unwilling to vote for candidates until they were assured of their support of the temperance cause.<sup>23</sup> Even the General Conference of 1891 went so far as to speak for the entire church,

"We will not support any candidate for office, either by voice or ballot when we are convinced that such candidate is connected with the manufacture or sale of intoxicants."<sup>24</sup>

Closely allied with these social issues is the matter of the sanctity of marriage. During these years the high-principled leaders of the Evangelical Association repeatedly spoke and wrote in behalf of a higher regard for the marriage tie. By 1891 the general conference pledged the denomination to "antagonize the destructive influences of the evil referred to (divorce), in building up that which has been destroyed, and in protecting and cherishing this divine institution (the home)."<sup>25</sup> This same conference also expressed its mind that parents should rear their children in accordance with the Word of God, should maintain family worship, should carefully select the literature for their children, should guide their young people carefully in all matters leading to marriage, and should hold fast to the sanctity of marriage. This body and also the conference of 1895 specifically stated that they favored laws on marriage and divorce that are in harmony with the Word of God and uniform for all states.<sup>26</sup> In 1895 they decided to petition Congress toward this end.

Every general conference of the church during these years voiced its sentiments in similar vein. So also the church periodicals through these decades printed many articles vehemently denouncing all compromises with the high sanctity of the home and commending the highest ideals for the married life. The fact is that until 1883 any member of the

<sup>21</sup> *The Living Epistle*, 1876, p. 284f.

<sup>22</sup> *EM*, 1879, p. 179.

<sup>23</sup> Record of the Central Pennsylvania Conference, 1883, p. 29.

<sup>24</sup> *GCF*, 1891, p. 89.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54f.

church who married an unconverted person was placed upon probation for a period of six months.<sup>27</sup>

Through all these difficult times of business reverses and financial panic, the leaders of the Evangelical Association urged their members to take a conservative and very moderate attitude. Many immigrants from Europe flooded the labor market so that even domestic servants outnumbered the homes which were able to hire them. At the opening of the period a serious railroad strike caused much hardship and provoked numerous expressions from individuals and conferences.<sup>28</sup>

There was a constant appeal for a fair deal for the laboring man and even for domestics, who received ridiculously low wages for long hours of service.<sup>29</sup>

In the light of the trends in the more recent years, it is amazing how keen and well fortified were the positions of these elders of the church. One of the treatments on this major social problem expressed this appeal:

"Disabuse the minds of the people that there should be no disparity in men holding property. This cannot be avoided in the highest form of government and civilization—warn the laboring man not to accept the teaching of thousands and of pretended sympathizers with them, who sow the seed of discontent and discouragement among the people from the platform. They always draw a dark picture. I would encourage and inspire you with hope. Make the best of your lot. I would advocate a proportionate distribution of the profits of the sale of goods by the capitalists among their employees. It is not more than just and right."<sup>28</sup>

## 69. ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The church which had begun just seventy-five years before in Eastern Pennsylvania now extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Hudson Bay to the Gulf of Mexico. The period of most rapid expansion was the period of camp meetings and great revival campaigns. During the latter years of the nineteenth century, these mass evangelistic meetings began to make way for the special protracted meetings of the local congregation, especially during the winter seasons. The church press reveals the misgivings of some, at least, as to the effectiveness of these seasonal or spasmodic campaigns to win men to the church. One honest thinker wrote,

"Sinners cannot understand why their souls should be so much more precious and their danger so much greater in one part of the year than in another. They cannot understand the philosophy of fervent mid-winter zeal and cool mid-summer indifference. What we need is not

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 1883, p. 53.

<sup>28</sup> *EM*, 1877, p. 8.

less special effort, but more of that steady well-directed, persistent labor which enlists and uses all the forces of the church, under the leadership of wise and godly workers. Every religious service and meeting should have a definite aim. The same spirit of earnestness and prayer, and interest in the welfare of souls, should prevail before and after, as during the special efforts. Then, in this normal healthy condition of the church, souls will be converted and established day by day, and the blessed work will go on its way from year to year."<sup>29</sup>

With the greater emphasis on continued effort throughout the entire year came also a growing sense of the necessity of the best possible type of organization for the denomination. For such increased efficiency the Iowa Conference sent a memorial to the General Conference of 1879 urging consideration of the stationing of the bishops in specific episcopal areas. Although this was not then granted, the matter was kept before the church so that in 1930 the areal method was adopted. This same conference ruled that women may be elected as superintendents of Sunday Schools,<sup>30</sup> and adopted a form and mode of procedure for the trial of a bishop. General conference officers were no longer considered as *ex officio* members of the general conference after 1879 and needed election from their home conferences as official delegates before they could be granted the privilege of sitting in the conference. This body also strengthened the position of the clergy of the church when it was determined that, after 1879, no licenses should be issued to exhorters, who were laymen and not ministers but who previously had been honored with licenses to exhort, which some flaunted as though they were ministerial papers.

For some years there had been a feeling that the name Evangelical Association of North America was not a very proper name for the denomination. Several unsuccessful attempts had previously been made when in 1879 the matter was referred to a special committee. The result this time was almost unanimous; the conference voted 69 to 9 to change the name to The Evangelical Church of North America and a committee was appointed to refer the matter to the conferences and adjust all necessary legal matters involved.<sup>31</sup> Either the legal matters were too complicated to permit an easy adjustment or the new name was rejected by the respective annual conferences for the original name remained unchanged until 1922.

Until 1883 all general officers were elected to office only after nomination and discussion of the relative merits of the candidates. This frequently took a considerable amount of time of the general conference. In this year it was decided that these officers should be elected

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<sup>29</sup> *EM*, April 19, 1881.

<sup>30</sup> *GCJ*, 1879, p. 35.

<sup>31</sup> *GCJ*, 1879, p. 92.



without previous nominations, which custom has since prevailed. This same conference strengthened the authority and provided more clearly for the work of the quarterly conference, which was the tri-monthly meeting of the pastor, the officials of the field labor, and the presiding elder for the transaction of business. A plan of procedure for the quarterly conference was adopted in 1883 and printed in the *Discipline*.

By 1891 so many changes in procedure had been made that the general conference ordered all laws still in force in 1891 to be summarized and printed in the *Discipline*. This codification of church law became an invaluable guide in the years that lay just ahead. The period from 1875 to 1891 is also marked with numerous changes in conference boundaries. These changes may be clearly seen in the list of conferences in Appendix C.

While the Evangelical Association was materially strengthening her own form of organization during these years she nevertheless continued her relationships with other denominations and worked toward a better understanding and for a closer federation of efforts. If there was any significant change in these relationships it was the fact that the relationship with the Methodists became weaker and that with the Church of the United Brethren in Christ became stronger.

At the General Conference of 1879, the Evangelical Association received an official invitation to join with the Methodist bodies of the world in holding an Ecumenical Council of Methodism. The invitation was accepted and, upon recommendation of the Ways and Means Committee, the general conference named Bishop R. Dubs and Rev. D. B. Beyers "to represent and speak for, and in the name of the Evangelical Association of North America, and to assist in the preliminary arrangement for said Ecumenical Conference." This Ecumenical Conference was not held until 1891 and in the meanwhile an unfortunate misunderstanding arose in the Evangelical body over the function of its representatives as named by the general conference. Some felt that they had been named to represent the Evangelical Association at the conference proper, while Bishop Esher insisted that these two had been named by the General Conference merely to help make arrangements for the conference. The result was that no delegates from the Evangelical Association attended this World Conference of Methodism and only a letter, conveying the greetings of the Evangelical Association, was sent to this great Methodist gathering.<sup>32</sup> Since that time the relations with the Methodist churches have lagged in interest.

On the contrary the relations with the Church of the United Brethren in Christ became warmer and more cordial in this period. A very friendly letter from the Rev. B. F. Booth, appointed by the 1877 General Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, was

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<sup>32</sup> G.C.J., 1891, p. 77.

read to the General Conference of the Evangelical Association in 1879. Four years later Bishop Dixon sent his greetings and the Rev. E. Light spoke as the official delegate of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. Among other worthy suggestions he recommended "a closer inter-denominational fellowship" between the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Association. The Rev. H. J. Becker was a very acceptable fraternal delegate from the Church of the United Brethren in Christ to the general conference in 1887, and stressed the similarity of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Association. Two years later the Rev. S. C. Breyfogel bore the greetings of the Evangelical Association to the General Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ in session in York, Pa. This fellowship between these two denominations of so great similarity has continued through the years with mutually increasing satisfaction.

Consideration of advancements and gains in the church through wider relationships and finer internal organization must be interrupted long enough to pay a last tribute to W. W. Orwig, one of the great organizers of the denomination, who died in 1889.

Orwig was born in Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania, September 25, 1810, and a few years later moved with his parents to Buffalo Valley, Union County, Pennsylvania. When sixteen years of age he visited friends near his old home in Orwigsburg at the time of the great revival there. Orwig was filled with a desire to become a real Christian and, in 1826 with Daniel Brickley, he walked three miles to a camp meeting near New Berlin where both the boys were converted. At eighteen, Orwig became a minister of the Eastern Conference and in 1833, five years later, was elected a presiding elder.

*Der Christliche Botschafter* was founded in 1836. During that year the general conference decided to re-open its publishing plant in New Berlin, Pennsylvania, and selected Orwig as the editor of this first journal of the denomination. He had been largely instrumental in bringing about the reestablishment of the Evangelical Press. For the first two years, 1837-39, Orwig was both editor and publisher, but from 1839-44 served only as editor. Then, after an interim of five years as an itinerant pastor in York, Pennsylvania, and Baltimore, Maryland, Orwig was once again called to edit *Der Christliche Botschafter* when the Rev. N. Gehr withdrew from the church in July 1849.

With the removal of the publishing house to Cleveland, Ohio, in the Spring of 1854, Orwig retired to Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where he devoted himself entirely to the completion of his *History of the Evangelical Association*. In 1856 he became the president of Union Seminary in New Berlin, Pennsylvania, and three years later was selected by the general conference as a bishop. After a term of four years in the

episcopal office, Orwig was once again named editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and in 1867 was chosen by the general conference as the general book agent. Because of poor health he resigned in 1869, although he was able to serve for several years thereafter as the treasurer of the Missionary Society in whose formation, thirty years before, he had been one of the leading spirits. Besides being of invaluable service to the denomination in suggesting and helping to organize its major institutions during this period, Orwig was also one of the most prolific writers of the church. In addition to editing *Der Christliche Botschafter*, he edited many of the English and German hymn books and other volumes that came from the early Evangelical Press. His *History of the Evangelical Association*, which unfortunately extends only to 1845, continues to be the truest portrayal of the origin of the church. It is at once the most authoritative work of the period it covers, and the finest piece of original research. All subsequent histories are indebted to it and have simply rephrased its judgments of these first five decades of the origin and growth of the church. In addition to this, in 1847 Orwig published a *Catechism*, which, for twenty-five years, remained the catechetical standard for the church, and in 1872 issued a work on holiness called *Die Heilsfülle*. Five years later his very practical book on "Pastoral Theology" appeared and, in 1882, a volume of his sermons was published.

On May 29, 1889, Orwig died in Cleveland, Ohio, saying to those with him, "I think I have done my duty. God bless you."

One son, Aaron W., became a minister of the church while three daughters became the wives of ministers, the Revs. J. Bowersox, E. A. Hoffman and S. L. Wiest, respectively. Bishop Rudolph Dubs preached the sermon at the funeral of this great leader of the church.

## 70. THE WOMAN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY <sup>83</sup>

When the Evangelical Association formed its first Missionary Society in 1838 and made it a denomination-wide body at the General Conference of 1839, the missionary impetus reached the hearts of the women of the church as well. That general conference had authorized the formation of auxiliary societies wherever possible. The Rev. Mr. Vogelbach, pastor of the church in Philadelphia, found little difficulty in performing his duty in this respect for, by November 11, 1839, he had organized the first Woman's Missionary Society in the denomination and enrolled more than sixty members. Their constitution was printed in *Der Christliche Botschafter* in December, 1839. Shortly afterward Mr. Vogelbach left the denomination and his pioneer leadership in missionary work among women in Philadelphia was discontinued. During

<sup>83</sup> Best source, *The Abiding Past*, 1884-1934, Cleveland, 1936.



the next few years, similar societies were formed in other sections of the church, but there was no relation between them and they also soon disappeared.

A generation later the opening of the first foreign mission of the church in Japan in 1875 roused some of the women of the Evangelical Association to a sense of their responsibility in missionary work. Through the efforts of such women as Mrs. W. H. Hammer, Ella J. Yost (later Mrs. E. J. Y. Preyer), Minerva Strawman (later Mrs. E. M. Spreng), and Kate Klinefelter (later Mrs. H. J. Bowman), local missionary societies were once more organized among the women of the church on a number of charges. *The Evangelical-Messenger* of May 23, 1878, carried strong appeals written by Miss Yost and Miss Rachel Hudson, one of the first missionaries to Japan, which challenged the women in the homeland to assume their rightful responsibility in the matter of mission study and support. The result of this promotion was a petition to the General Board of Missions which met in October, 1878, asking permission to form a Woman's Missionary Society, auxiliary to the general Missionary Society. Through the opposition of several of the leaders of the denomination at that time, the request was refused.

Not to be discouraged by one failure these leaders among the women continued to create and sustain interest among their friends so that two years later another petition was sent to the Board of Missions which this time granted their request. This second petition had been very carefully prepared by Miss Minerva Strawman, the Rev. E. Wengerd, pastor of the congregation at Lindsey, Ohio, the Rev. George Schneider, and the editors who helped materially to bring about favorable consideration of this request. The board granted permission to form such missionary societies on condition that both men and women may become members and that in each case the society shall be formed with the consent of and under the supervision of the pastor.

Under this limitation the first societies were formed on the afternoon of October 27, 1880, at Lindsey, Ohio, and in South Chicago, Illinois. The third society was formed in Cleveland in the Perry Street congregation on February 9, 1881, and a fourth in Naperville, Illinois, on May 3, 1881. The columns of the church periodicals were gladly opened to these women who wrote much regarding their proposed organization throughout the church and the work which they desired to accomplish. Mrs. W. H. Hammer was appointed the first corresponding secretary and in January, 1883, sent out her first letter to all the congregations. Within a very short time forty new societies had been formed and the need became apparent for a central organization to bind together the scattered branches of this body.

In those earliest days the women of the Cleveland society, located at the center of the denominational life, in the very midst of the general officers of the denomination, guided the preliminary developments of the Woman's Missionary Society. Miss Ella J. Yost was the president of the Cleveland Woman's Missionary Society which in reality was the first central society. A general convention of the women of the denomination was called for June 3, 1883, and was to be held in Calvary church, Cleveland. Fifteen societies sent delegates who resolved to memorialize the general conference of that year, seeking permission to be constituted as a Woman's Board of Missions auxiliary to the General Missionary Society. They desired to raise gifts for foreign missions in addition to the regular missionary gifts from the local congregations and in such a way as not to interfere with other gifts. Their petition was favorably considered and they were given authority to organize as an auxiliary society of the parent missionary society and to be under the supervision of the Board of Missions and were requested to submit their proceedings annually to this board for examination and approval.

Since the Board of Missions was to meet in Cleveland in October, 1884, the women decided to call their first official convention for the same time and place that they might properly organize and have proper sanction for their constitution. Ten societies sent delegates to this important meeting and many others anxiously awaited the results of what later should be called their constitutional convention. After simplification and revision the constitution for the Woman's Missionary Society was finally adopted by the Board of Missions on Monday evening, October 12, 1884. The following morning the newly formed Woman's Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association was formally organized and chose as its first officers, president, Mrs. E. J. Y. Preyer; vice-presidents, Mrs. H. C. Smith, Mrs. Thomas Bowman, and Miss Minerva Strawman; recording secretary, Miss Emma L. Yost; corresponding secretary, Mrs. W. H. Hammer; and treasurer, Mrs. U. F. Swengel.

Beginning with January 1, 1885, *The Evangelical-Messenger* carried a regular monthly article by Mrs. Preyer suggesting programs for the monthly meetings of the local societies of women. By the time of the annual meeting in Lindsey, Ohio, September 25-27, 1885, forty-six societies sent reports which revealed that \$1,532.84 had been contributed by the women of the church for foreign missions during that year. A year later there were sixty local societies with a total of 1,651 members. By the sixth annual meeting the society had grown to include 124 auxiliaries, having a total membership of 7,959.

Following the suggestion of the Rev. U. F. Swengel, of Cleveland, the Woman's Missionary Society decided in 1886 to sponsor a regular

missionary journal, *The Missionary Messenger*. The following year this paper was approved by the general conference and became one of the official organs of the church. Mrs. Preyer was elected the editor of its woman's department. Two other important advance steps were taken in 1887 when, with the approval of the Board of Missions, the Woman's Missionary Society appointed Mrs. T. L. Haines as the first superintendent of Mission Bands for children and, when these women assumed the full support of missionaries in Washington Territory and of Ada Johnson, missionary in Japan. By 1890, forty-four Mission Bands had been formed with an enrollment of 1,484 children. This year also marked the formation of the first Conference Branch Woman's Missionary Society, the Platte River Branch, which was organized at Beaver Crossing, Nebraska, March 15, 1890. The constitution of the General Woman's Missionary Society had been altered and properly ratified by the Board of Missions in 1889 so as to permit the organization of conference branch societies which continue to the present as the essential form of its democratic organization and the basis for a delegated representation in its conventions.

## 71. THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY

That the leaders of the Evangelical Association sensed the necessity of caring well for the religious guidance of their young people is shown by the fact that a catechism was one of the very first books to be printed for the church and also by the constant emphasis upon the proper education of the children of the church. Even the missionaries in the mid-western states were zealous for Christian education very early. While the first Sunday School of the church was begun in 1832 it was only eleven years later that the Rev. Absalom Schaeffer, the first Evangelical preacher in Indiana, organized a Sunday School in the Old First church (later Commercial Street church), at Dayton, Ohio. Feeling a need for more time with his young people Schaeffer also organized a catechetical class and a German week-day school in the church. The efforts of Mr. Schaeffer appear now almost like a providential preparation for the founding in this congregation of the first young people's society by the Rev. C. F. Hansing six months before the Rev. Francis E. Clark founded the United Society of Christian Endeavor.<sup>84</sup>

The earlier experience of Hansing had specially fitted him for his work among the young people at Dayton, Ohio., whither he was sent as pastor in 1880. In his previous pastorates at Louisville and Indianapolis he had not only stressed catechetical instruction but had also gathered young people on other occasions particularly for prayer. Dur-

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<sup>84</sup> *History of the Sunday Schools in Eleven Annual Conferences* (mimeographed), Cleveland, 1936, p. 47.



ing his years in Indianapolis in 1878 and 1879 his young people's group was actually organized into a "Gebets-Bund" (Prayer League), with the pastor as their leader.<sup>35</sup> This experience fitted Hansing most adequately to meet the great opportunity in the city of Dayton. Here on September 13, 1880, Hansing helped the young people of his congregation to effect their first organization and select their officers. While they were known as the "Jugend-Bund" (Youth League) this society was in reality the very first young people's society of its kind in the country. Committees were appointed and regular visits were made to the sick, the poor and shut-ins. Leaders for discussions were invariably chosen two weeks in advance. The young people joined heartily in the work of winning others to Christ and the church. Visiting committees invited non-members to attend the services of the church and of the Sunday School, and during that year the pastor was able to report forty conversions, most of them young people. Other churches soon heard of this marvelous achievement and in a short time similar Jugend-Bunds (Youth Leagues) were organized in Indianapolis First church, Louisville Zion church, and in Elkhart. Three months after Hansing organized his first Youth League, the father of Bishop C. H. Stauffacher organized a similar young people's society in Des Moines, Iowa, where he was a pastor at that time.

When the work of Francis E. Clark became widely known young people's societies were organized throughout the entire land in the 80's and 90's. Among these societies there were many Evangelical groups. They became so numerous that the leaders of the denomination decided that a unification of the young people of the church would be beneficial. Accordingly a group of young people and thirty pastors met at Linwood Park, at Vermillion, Ohio, in 1890, and under the guidance of their chairman, Bishop J. J. Esher, planned for such a denomination-wide organization. The following summer another similar gathering was called to meet at the same place from August 10 to 12, where a constitution was adopted. This organization was sanctioned a few months later by the general conference of the Evangelical Association in session at Indianapolis, Indiana. The Rev. C. A. Thomas was the first president and the Rev. J. C. Hornberger the first secretary. In addition to these men J. G. Haller, S. J. Gamertsfelder and S. P. Spreng served on the first Board of Control.<sup>36</sup> The presidents of the Young People's Alliance were C. A. Thomas, S. P. Spreng, G. Heinmiller, H. A. Kramer, W. C. Hallwachs, and the following served as corresponding or general secretaries, J. C. Hornberger, G. Heinmiller, Christian Staebler, F. C. Berger, and E. W. Praetorius.

The object of this newly created body, called the Young People's

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<sup>35</sup> Letter from Rev. C. F. Hansing, July 4, 1930.

<sup>36</sup> *G.C.J.*, 1891, p. 145.

Alliance, was to promote the religious, intellectual and social culture of the young members and friends of the church and in particular to train young people in Christian living and for service in the church.

With similar objectives the Keystone League of Christian Endeavor was organized by the newly formed United Evangelical Church at its first general conference in Philadelphia on October 9, 1891, and the supervision of the work of the league was committed to a General Managing Board, consisting of four ministerial and two lay members. The first meeting of the Board was held in Philadelphia, October 13, 1891. In 1892 the Board was increased to seven members, and a committee was appointed to frame a constitution, and departmental superintendents were chosen. The General Conference of 1894 formally adopted the Keystone League and incorporated a provision for it in the new *Discipline*.

In 1891, the Rev. W. H. Fouke was elected president of the Managing Board and the Rev. U. F. Swengel as secretary. They served in these capacities until 1902, when the Rev. U. F. Swengel was elected president and the Rev. W. H. Fouke as secretary. In 1910, the Rev. J. Q. A. Curry was elected president and the Rev. D. A. Poling as secretary and field secretary. Curry served as president until the merger of the churches in 1922, and Poling, who after two years of service resigned because of his duties as secretary of the Ohio State Christian Endeavor, was succeeded in 1912 by the Rev. W. E. Peffley, who served as secretary and field secretary until the merger of the two churches.

Within a few years it was found advisable to separate the younger members of the societies so that programs might be more readily adapted to their interests and needs and provision was made for a Junior Alliance at the General Young People's Alliance Convention at Linwood Park, Ohio, in 1895. Those who served as Junior superintendents were Mrs. H. J. Niebaum, Miss Margaret Horn, and Miss Alice Peters. Dr. Christian Staebler prepared a *Junior Alliance Manual* which appeared in Cleveland in 1909. The first *Manual* for the Young People's Alliance itself was in the German language and was prepared by the Rev. C. A. Thomas. The second *Manual* prepared by the Rev. J. C. Hornberger was in English and the third by Dr. Staebler was again in German. When the Rev. F. C. Berger came to a position of leadership in this work in 1907 he prepared a *Manual* for young people's work which ran through three editions between 1914 and 1919. Since that time many pamphlet aids have been prepared by the successive general secretaries.

Like the other movements among the young people during these years the Young People's Alliance and the Keystone League of Christian Endeavor made very rapid strides forward. The Young People's Alliance held eight General Conventions at Linwood Park, Vermillion,

Ohio, in 1892 and in 1895; at Naperville, Ill., in 1899; at Cedar River Park, Iowa, in 1903; at Linwood Park, Ohio, in 1907; at Oakwood Park, Wawasee, Ind., in 1911; at Lomira, Wis., in 1915, and at Lawrence, Kansas, in 1919. At the close of 1922 there were 1,252 Senior Alliances with 45,700 members, 75 Intermediate Alliances with 1,507 members and 324 Junior Alliances with 7,731 members, a total of 1,651 Alliances with a total membership of 54,938.

The Keystone League of Christian Endeavor held a General Convention in Chicago in 1914, and at the close of 1922 the membership of the Keystone League included 509 Senior Leagues with 18,814 members, 49 Intermediate Leagues with 877 members, 197 Junior Leagues with 7,266 members, a total of 755 Leagues and a total membership of 26,957.

After the merger of the churches in 1922 the Evangelical League of Christian Endeavor began its work with 61,048 members in 1,681 Senior Leagues, 2,214 members in 114 Intermediate Leagues, 13,007 members in 475 Junior Leagues, a total of 76,269 members in 2,270 Leagues of all age groups.

## 72. THE DIVISION OF THE CHURCH

What took place in other denominations happened also in the Evangelical Church. Division in the major denominations such as the Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Reformed, United Brethren in Christ, and other churches, caused by various reasons such as slavery, secret societies, forms of church government and powers of leadership, occurred also in the Evangelical Association. It is evident that during that period, emphasis was placed upon those things on which there was a difference of opinion as contrasted with the present day emphasis upon those things on which there is fundamental agreement in Christian thought and life; and as many denominations are uniting now, many churches were dividing then. It was during this period of disunion that the spirit of divisiveness crept also into the Evangelical Association.

Toward the close of the first century of the history of the Evangelical Association, just about seventy-five years after the death of Jacob Albright, at least two factors combined to produce a division in the church, which proved to be a most unfortunate and deeply regrettable experience. What, shortly after the close of the Civil War, had begun as a theological debate between men of integrity and fine intellectual capacity degenerated during the next generation into a personal controversy between leaders of the church. While the real differences were not primarily theological, the division of loyalties was largely along the lines first drawn by the theological controversy. At the turn of the closing decade of the nineteenth century, the spirit en-



gendered on both sides of the controversy had risen to such a level that an open break in the church was the logical result.

While the controversy regarding the doctrine of Christian Perfection and the practical question regarding the use of the German or English language in the church, were points of constant irritation, they can hardly be considered as contributory to the division. The real causes of the division were (1) the placing of additional limitation upon the episcopal form of church government, and (2) the keen personal rivalry among leaders of the denomination.

When the first important revision of the original *Discipline* was made by the General Conference of 1816 a form for the ordination of bishops was included among the rituals of the church. A decade later, however, the early leaders of the denomination sensed that the Methodists and other bodies were developing a growing dislike for such separation of their bishops by a unique ordination because it led to the demonstration of autocratic powers not originally intended to pertain to such ordination. Consequently, even before they came to choose a bishop, the leaders of the Evangelical Association dropped this ritual for ordination of bishops at the General Conference of 1830. Since Jacob Albright died before this rubric was included in the *Discipline* and since John Seybert was not elected a bishop until nine years after it was dropped, the Evangelical Church has never set apart any of its bishops by episcopal ordination.

The question of episcopal power, however, remained a very live issue and became a growing source of dispute and irritation by 1873. Throughout the 1880's it became increasingly more obvious that an open break in the ranks of the church was imminent. So much ill will had been created on both sides and such loyalty had been shown to leaders on both sides that a compromise seemed impossible.

Dr. Carroll, then editor of the New York *Independent* and a leading American churchman, believed that the division could be averted and offered his services as mediator between the two factions. That the laymen of both groups desired unity at all costs is to be seen in the means they used to try to avert a break. In fact many of these laymen could not understand what the real difficulty was and why such intense feelings should have been developed by their leaders. This remained true even during the years when the details of the separation were worked out, and a choice of one side or the other had to be made by the lay people, many of whom were uninformed and consequently based their choices on personal attachment to their pastors or preference for other leaders. In the earlier years of this quadrennium, before the sentiments of their clerical advisors more clearly separated them, the laymen of both groups devoutly wished that the pending issues could be settled amicably, and earnestly sought to prevent an

open break in the church. As early as February 20, 1891, a number of the laity had published and distributed in eastern Pennsylvania a pamphlet stating:

"There is no excuse for an attempt to divide our church, and we impose our solemn and prayerful protest against it, for how, we ask, can the servants of an institution, pledged by sacred obligations to hold its interests paramount to their own, consent, or be party to any action whatever that, in the remotest manner, promises injury to the institution by which they were ordained. . . ." <sup>37</sup>

However, convictions had become so dominant on both that they loomed as large as principles which one defends with one's life, and consequently it simply remained for the coming of the next session of the general conference to provide the opportunity for an open breach in the church.

The General Conference in 1887 had delegated the power of naming the place for the 1891 session of the general conference to the Board of Publication, and the Board of Publication named the city of Indianapolis, Indiana. The minority group disputed the right of the general conference to delegate such power, and insisted that this prerogative automatically belonged to the East Pennsylvania Conference, the oldest of the annual conferences, and consequently the East Pennsylvania Conference named the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as the place for the next session of the general conference. The result was that two groups assembled on October 1, 1891, both claiming to be the General Conference of the Evangelical Association. The majority group met in Indianapolis with Bishops J. J. Esher and Thomas Bowman present and the minority group met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with Bishop Rudolph Dubs present. Each group organized and carried out its work as though it were the official body of the denomination, and during the next quadrennium there were, so to speak, two churches within a church, each with its own set of general officers. The saddest four years in the history of the denomination followed during which many longstanding friendships were severed and new lines of allegiance were formed. In a number of the states, trials were held in the civil courts to determine which group was the Evangelical Association and to whom the property belonged. The courts decided in favor of the majority group. On November 30, 1894, at Naperville, Illinois, the minority group organized itself as The United Evangelical Church. In the Evangelical Association there were now 110,095 members and 982 itinerant ministers, and in the United Evangelical Church there were 61,120 members and 415 itinerant ministers.

Through the years laymen had played a very small part in the an-

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<sup>37</sup> Quoted in Kinsey, R. B., *An Open Letter*, Reading, Pa., 1892, p. 22.

nual and general conferences, and had little to do in the administrative matters of the Evangelical Association. If it can be said that any good at all came from this church division it would be the larger place which the laity came to assume in the affairs of both churches. There had been some suggestions for change along this line by the minority group during the years immediately preceding, looking toward greater democracy and a larger place for laymen in all the official bodies of the church. Both General Conferences of 1891 adopted some legislation in this direction. The group in Philadelphia made provision for laymen in all their official bodies, which provision was included when three years later the constitution for the new church was prepared and adopted. The legislation at Indianapolis was more provisional in nature but led in the same general direction. Four laymen were added to the Board of Publication, three to the Board of the Ebenezer Orphan Home, and it was recommended that the General Missionary Society should adopt some system of lay representation. The question of lay representation in the annual and general conferences was referred to a committee of five ministers and four laymen for study with the request that their findings be brought to the next session of the general conference. Meanwhile, however, the laymen of every presiding elder district were permitted to send to their respective annual conferences three representatives who were to be counted as advisory members and were to be permitted to share only in discussions on temporal questions.<sup>38</sup> In recent years laymen have come to have a much larger place in the official life and work of the denomination.

Today it is generally agreed that this division in the Evangelical Association should never have occurred. No one can estimate how much greater would have been the influence of the Evangelical Church and how much more effective her work if this rift had not occurred during the period of its most rapid growth and expansion.

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<sup>38</sup> *GCJ*, 1891, p. 103.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH—1894-1922

#### 73. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE NEW CHURCH

The most decisive year in the settlement of the dispute between the majority and minority groups in the Evangelical Association was 1894. In the month of March of that year the Supreme Court of Ohio decided adversely in the Cleveland suit brought by the minority group against the majority group for the possession of the Publishing House in Cleveland. A similar decision against the minority group was rendered in May by the Iowa courts in the Des Moines case. Finally on the first of October the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania decided that the church properties in Pennsylvania belonged to the majority group as represented in the 1887 General Conference and at Indianapolis in 1891. This really meant that the church properties in Pennsylvania were to remain in the hands of a comparatively small group for in this state approximately forty thousand members had withdrawn from some four hundred and fifty churches. In some instances local congregations bought back properties from the Evangelical Association and in other cases new church buildings were built in the immediate vicinity and sometimes on the opposite corner from the old church.

Although it had been obvious that ultimately an open break would come between these groups which were growing increasingly antagonistic, it was not until the year 1894 that the real division was precipitated. Quite as early as 1891 it was already evident how the ranks of the ministry would divide and how the leading laymen would align themselves. The court decisions of 1894 changed very few from their positions of loyalty to one group or the other but this year finally decided the issue that a new denomination must be formed and that at once.

On October 10th, within a fortnight after the Pennsylvania decision, the minority ministers of the East Pennsylvania Conference met in special session as a convention in Metropolitan Hall in Reading. The 102 ministers and 79 laymen present formally constituted themselves the East Pennsylvania Conference of the United Evangelical Church and chose Bishop W. M. Stanford as their president and Rev. J. H. Shirey as the secretary. The general principles of the minority party as adopted at the Philadelphia General Conference in 1891 were maintained, all previous legislation of this group under the old name was confirmed and the conference societies were reestablished. This newly constituted body, representing the oldest area in the original church,

exercised the prerogative, previously inhering in the oldest conference body, and called a general conference session to be held November 29, 1894, in Grace church, Naperville, Illinois.

In a similar way the Central Pennsylvania body met in convention in the Bennett Street Evangelical church in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, on October 16th, and effected a permanent organization as the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the United Evangelical Church. Bishop C. S. Haman was chosen the president and the Rev. Ammon Stapleton as secretary. This conference also reestablished all conference societies, legalized all of their previous actions and confirmed the call for a general conference.

The Pittsburgh Conference of the United Evangelical Church was established in almost the identical manner in a special session beginning on October 24th in the Calvary Church, Johnstown. Bishop W. M. Stanford was chosen their president and the Rev. J. Q. A. Curry as secretary. The Ohio Conference organized on November 5th in Lancaster with Bishop Rudolph Dubs as chairman and W. R. Sherrick as secretary. Two days later the Oregon Conference in special session at Lafayette, Oregon, elected J. Bowersox their chairman and C. C. Poling as secretary and legislated almost identically as the preceding conferences had done.

It is needless to say that spirit and feeling ran high during these controversial days of 1894. The continued tension, the court tests, the unparalleled publication of personal and party attacks in pamphlets and the regular church journals during this first quadrennium of the 1890's makes this period the darkest and saddest era in the history of the church. The one bright spot in all this is the participation of the laity in these legislative assemblies of the church, the first since the organizational conference of 1807 over which Jacob Albright presided.

When it was finally determined at law that the majority party was the Evangelical Association and that the minority group had no right to the name of the church or its properties, there remained but one alternative, the organization of the new church. Those who had formerly withdrawn from the regular conferences and boards of the Evangelical Association now gathered for the first time in a general convention which assembled informally at 7:30 P. M., on November 29, 1894, when Bishop Rudolph Dubs called the body to order. With the convening of this body and the organization as a general conference on the following day, the United Evangelical Church was begun. During the preceding three years since the General Conference of 1891 this group had functioned as a separate body but had not yet organized independently of the Evangelical Association. For all practical purposes, it may be stated correctly that the United Evangelical Church began in October 1891 when a separate Board of Bishops and other

general officers were elected to serve that portion of the church. The technical and legal beginning of the new denomination, however, dates to November 30, 1894 when its first general conference was organized.

The following statements were read and adopted at the session in 1894,

"We, the so-called 'minority' of the Evangelical Association of North America, but now by action of the Annual Conferences here represented, the United Evangelical Church, which name we hereby ratify and adopt as our denominational name. . . .

"The concurrent call of the several annual conferences of our Church convening this body at this time and place is fully justified and demanded by the condition of the circumstances, under which we are placed. Under this call we are now assembled as the first General Conference of the United Evangelical Church for the transaction of business as may properly come before such a body in the interest of the church."<sup>1</sup>

In the succeeding days this body adopted a book of *Discipline* and created boards and agencies to administer and direct the affairs of the new church.

At the opening of the session at Naperville, Illinois, the action of the East Pennsylvania Conference was read, calling this session for the last Thursday of November, 1894. The minutes of the general conference held in Philadelphia in 1891 were ordered transcribed into a proper record book and placed in the possession of the secretary of this conference. Bishops Dubs and Stanford were reelected as the Board of Bishops and in the main the general conference was organized very similarly to the Philadelphia Conference. Most of the time of this session, from November 29th to December 13th, was taken up with the problem of proper organization of the church. A *Discipline* was compiled and ordered printed.

An enacting clause was adopted by this body declaring that the new laws embodied in the new book of *Discipline* were operative at once, so far as the general conference was concerned, and would become operative in each of the annual conferences as soon as adopted by the same. Meantime there was a provision made that such annual conferences might operate provisionally under these laws until ratified at their annual sessions.

Committees were appointed to arrange for the preparation and publication of English and German hymn books and also a catechism. The publisher was ordered to begin the publication of a church almanac for 1896 in both the English and the German. This was the beginning of what has continued to the present as the Year

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<sup>1</sup> GCJU, 1894, p. 52f.



Book of the denomination, containing an annual calendar and a directory of all officers, boards, conferences and ministers of the denomination. An historical article on the United Evangelical Church, prepared by the Rev. D. B. Byers, was approved and recommended for publication in the American Church History Series just then in the process of publication by Charles Scribner and Sons. Under the management of S. L. Wiest (1898-1910) and J. J. Nungesser (1910-22), the Publishing House of the United Evangelical Church in Harrisburg, Pa., did a flourishing business and established an excellent plant.

Since this conference met shortly after the massacre of many Armenian Christians by the Turkish soldiers, a very strong resolution was adopted deploring the outrage, expressing sympathy for the Christian Armenians and asking the President of the United States to use his influence to prevent the continuance or future occurrence of such atrocities.

The statistical report indicated that there were 61,120 members in the newly formed United Evangelical Church. The ministry numbered a total of 641 of whom 226 were local preachers, leaving 415 regular itinerants.

#### 74. THE EARLIER GENERAL CONFERENCES OF THE UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH

The second general conference of the United Evangelical Church was called to order by Bishop Rudolph Dubs at 2: 00 P. M., on October 6, 1898, in Trinity Church, Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Here, as in the previous session of the general conference, the laity of the denomination was represented by a number equal to that of the ministers. The United Evangelical Church made it a fundamental policy from its inception to preserve the balance of representation so that in all matters true democracy might prevail and an equal privilege of representation might accompany an equal sharing of responsibility.

While an effort had been made to raise \$20,000 for a foreign mission project before 1898, only half this amount had been actually raised by the time of the general conference and so the foreign missionary project was postponed until sufficient funds should materialize. Meanwhile the Woman's Missionary Society, organized four years before, revised its constitution and increased its effectiveness as an educational agency, and as a financial aid to the General Missionary Society.

By 1898 the educational work of the United Evangelical Church had grown so that there were then 784 Sunday Schools with 74,651 pupils and 10,602 officers and teachers. So, too, the progress of the Keystone League of Christian Endeavor is attested by the report of 427 societies, with 38 others affiliated, including 15,170 active and

2,980 associate members. In addition there were 109 junior societies with 2,667 active and 1,389 associate members.

The growth in the regular membership of the denomination during this quadrennium is not very clearly indicated in the journals of the general conference. In 1894, 61,120 were reported as members of the church; in 1895, the membership was reported as 50,240; in 1898 the statistics reported 59,190 members. The columns on losses reveal that during this quadrennium 22,050 were lost to the church of which 6,507 are indicated as simply withdrawn, 5,238 as "moved away without certificate" and 3,940 as "transferred from charge." The total gain for the quadrennium was 30,883 of which 21,115 were received by "confession of faith," 4,420 "with certificate" and 5,348 "transferred to charge," which is a net gain of 8,833 members. From these statistics it is quite evident that the figures given for 1895 are considered correct.

By this year the United Evangelical Church had 426 regular itinerant preachers, and 684 churches valued at \$1,727,643. Other property of the denomination including parsonages was valued at a bit more than \$200,000 and against this total property value there was an indebtedness of \$1,946,299. This very material handicap to the denomination in its earliest years is accounted for by the fact that they lost practically all their church property through decisions of the courts. Moreover, wherever the old church properties were still used after 1894 by any United Evangelical congregation, they had been purchased from the Evangelical Association.

The United Evangelical Church had two educational institutions; Albright College in Myerstown, Pennsylvania, and Central Pennsylvania College at New Berlin, Pennsylvania. A preparatory school at Lafayette, Oregon, was also under its patronage. While no theological institution was maintained by the United Evangelical Church, plans were laid for establishing opportunities for such training in one of the colleges.

Feeling the need for educational helps for the religious guidance of the children of the church, the General Conference of 1898 considered the question of an official catechism. Manuscripts prepared by the Revs. Ammon Stapleton and J. J. Hartzler were submitted by the Board of Publication to the general conference. The general conference in turn referred the manuscripts back to the Board of Publication with the instruction that one of these manuscripts be accepted and published during the following year with asterisks marking the questions and answers which might be used with smaller children. It is apparent that the Hartzler document was accepted, for in 1901 a catechism appeared bearing the name of Jacob J. Hartzler. The official *Hymnal* of the United Evangelical Church which had appeared in 1897 was the work of a committee consisting of the Revs. H. B. Hartzler, W. M. Stanford, J. D. Woodring, U. F. Swengel and Prof. Otis L. Jacobs.

Perhaps the only time the question of race ever came officially before the general conferences of either of the Evangelical bodies occurred in this year when an independent colored congregation of Alexandria, Virginia, petitioned the United Evangelical Church to permit their union with the church. Due to other missionary obligations already begun, it was found impossible to undertake this work which also involved the support of an industrial and normal school for colored persons in Alexandria, Virginia.

The legislation of this session of the general conference as well as that of the subsequent sessions of the general conference of the United Evangelical Church invariably was aimed at the greater good for the individual. Usually the underprivileged individual was kept in first consideration. In the stated resolutions and appeals for a proper observance of Sunday, it was usually made clear that the Lord's Day was designed for man's rest and worship and that all other uses of the day were not in keeping with the teaching of the Bible.

The church was also greatly interested in the lot of the working-man in this period of the rapid industrial development of our country. As early as 1898 the United Evangelical Church clearly pronounced its position:

"WHEREAS, The fundamental principles of society are ignored and assailed by certain socialistic movements which imperil society and the Christian church; therefore,

(1) *Resolved*, That we are decidedly opposed to all monopolies, trusts, combines, which widen the chasm between capital and labor, assuming lordship over the conscience and rights of the wage earner and exacting from him service without adequate remuneration,

(2) That we disapprove of the arbitrary acts of organized labor against capital often leading to strikes and riots. We favor for all such unjust differences an amicable adjustment by arbitration, and insist that the right relations are found in the observance of the Golden Rule and the word of the Master, 'Love thy neighbor as thyself,'

(3) That we emphatically denounce Anarchism, in its attempt to overthrow the principles of society and the Christian church as intolerable. We urge domestic economy as against indulgence in wastefulness, pride, vanity, extravagance in dress, decorations in jewelry and sumptuous living. We emphasize the equal rights of the individual, but no less the individual's responsibility to God for the right use of his talents and means for the elevation of society and the glory of God."<sup>2</sup>

Like its sister denomination in this respect the United Evangelical Church was constantly alert to points of tension and crises in the social structure and not only issued statements of policy but gave guidance and leadership to the members of her constituency involved in social problems.

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<sup>2</sup> *GCJU*, 1898, p. 69.



The third session of the general conference of the United Evangelical Church convened in First church, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, on October 9, 1902. Since the rule had been previously adopted that a bishop could not serve more than two consecutive terms of four years each in that office, this conference elected the Revs. H. B. Hartzler and W. F. Heil as the new general superintendents of the church. Former Bishop Dubs was elected editor of *Die Evangelische Zeitschrift* and former Bishop Stanford as editor of *The Evangelical*. For the first time an editor for the Sunday School and League literature was elected and the office fell to the Rev. W. H. Fouke.

The Board of Church Extension was authorized by this general conference to become incorporated. During the early years of the United Evangelical Church when the matter of proper places to worship was a serious problem, this board rendered remarkable service. During four years 136 church buildings had been added, bringing the total of church edifices to 820. The total value of the property of the church now amounted to \$2,751,207, an increase of 41% in four years. The Board of Church Extension proved of invaluable assistance throughout the entire history of the church and after 1922, when united with a similar board of the Evangelical Association, proved a very real asset to the merged church. This board has as its primary function the lending of funds to local congregations at a low rate of interest for building purposes. The provision that all funds be promptly repaid to this board makes it possible to keep them rotating among needy congregations and thus help many small and large congregations to secure more adequate church buildings.

The church membership showed a net gain of 4,200 or 7.2% bringing the total in 1902 to 63,390. The gain of 103 Sunday Schools represented a gain of 13.1% bringing the total to 887 such educational groups. The missionary collections increased over 109% due somewhat to the fact that the first foreign mission of the church had been established in Hunan, China, by the Board of Missions early in the quadrennium. On January 10, 1900, the Board of Missions selected Dr. C. Newton Dubs as the first missionary to China and as the superintendent of the missionary work of the United Evangelical Church in China. A little later Rev. A. Wesley Mell was chosen as an additional missionary. Dubs and his party sailed from San Francisco on November 20, 1900. Almost a year later, on September 12, 1901, the Rev. and Mrs. C. A. Fuessle of Le Mars, Iowa, sailed to assist in this mission work in China. In December, 1901 Superintendent Dubs moved to Changsha in the province of Hunan and began a commendable work there that has continued through the years.

It should also be stated that the average salary of the ministers of the church was increased slightly more than 10% during the quadrennium,

bringing the average salary to \$537 per year. The highest regular ministerial salary was \$669 and bishops received \$1,400.

## 75. BROAD POLICY OF FEDERATION

Throughout most of the life of the United Evangelical Church there was a very cordial relation with other evangelical Protestant bodies. As early as 1897 Bishop Dubs represented the United Evangelical Church as the fraternal delegate to the general conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. The Rev. H. B. Hartzler served in this capacity in 1901 and four years later Bishop W. M. Stanford addressed the General Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ at Topeka, Kansas. Dr. A. W. Drury, the most outstanding historian of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, bore the greetings of his body to the general conference of the United Evangelical Church held in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 1906.

In 1910 the first fraternal delegate from the Methodist Episcopal Church appeared at the general conference of the United Evangelical Church at Canton, Ohio. This visit was reciprocated by Bishop Dubs at the next Methodist General Conference. These friendly relations as well as those with the United Brethren were constantly maintained. These happy relations with the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, particularly, have prepared the way for most friendly visitations after 1922, which have eventuated in actual proposals and preparation for organic union.

From the very first negotiations to establish a Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America the United Evangelical Church participated and became one of thirty-two participating and supporting members at the first regular meeting of the Federal Council at Louisville, Ky., in December, 1908. Since then leaders of the denomination have been prominently associated in this interdenominational work.

By the time of the fourth general conference which met on October 5, 1906, in Zion Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the United Evangelical Church had a membership of 69,046 representing a gain of 5,656. Having served only one term both Bishops Hartzler and Heil were re-elected. In addition to his duties as editor of the Sunday School literature, Rev. W. H. Fouke was elected as general secretary of the Keystone League of Christian Endeavor. The Rev. B. H. Niebel was elected to the combined office of general secretary of Missions and Church Extension.

## 76. THE LATER GENERAL CONFERENCES

The years between 1906 and 1910 marked a net gain of 4,505 members which brought the strength of the church by June of 1910 to 73,551 adherents. There were now three less than 1,000 congregations

and 509 men in the active ministry. The Sunday Schools showed an enrollment of 100,690. Although no reports appear for catechetical classes and catechumens, this general conference stressed the necessity of providing such instructions for the children. And like their sister denomination this general conference also kept its educational work closely allied with the home by assigning such matters to the general conference committee on "Family, Sunday Schools and Youth."

Since the terms of Bishops H. B. Hartzler and W. F. Heil had expired a new board of general superintendents was elected. The new bishops were U. F. Swengel and W. H. Fouke. Former Bishop Hartzler was chosen as the editor of *The Evangelical*, and W. M. Stanford, editor of *The Evangelical* during the preceding quadrennium, was named editor of the Sunday School literature to succeed the newly elected Bishop Fouke. At this session Daniel A. Poling, destined to be a world leader in young people's work, was made general and full-time secretary of the Sunday Schools and Keystone Leagues of Christian Endeavor.

This body ordered that hereafter the annual publication which had previously appeared as the English *Almanac* should become the *Year Book*. This volume which depicts the most important advancements in the life of the church during each year as well as including the rosters of ministers, officials, boards and stated meetings, has appeared continuously until the present. The Board of Publication had previously been negotiating with the Rev. Ammon Stapleton to have him prepare a life of Jacob Albright for publication and at this conference the board was ordered to purchase this manuscript when it was ready for the press. Six years later at the death of Dr. Stapleton, the manuscript had not yet been printed but the following year it was edited by H. B. Hartzler and was printed in Harrisburg by the Evangelical Press in 1917.

While the most friendly spirit continued toward the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and the Methodist Episcopal Church, each of which had their official representatives bring greetings to the conference of 1910 in Canton, Ohio, the trend toward merging with the Evangelical Association was becoming noticeably stronger.

Former Bishop Rudolph Dubs was given permission to visit the mission field of the church in China, then under the supervision of his son, the Rev. C. Newton Dubs. The Board of Publication arranged for the carrying on of his work as editor of *Die Evangelische Zeitschrift* during his absence and the expenses of his trip were apportioned to the respective conferences. Four years later at the general conference, Superintendent C. N. Dubs presented a first hand report of the excellent progress of the work on the foreign mission field, which greatly in-



spired the conference and led toward even wider interest in this work throughout the United Evangelical Church.

The sixth general conference convened in the Salem Church, Barrington, Illinois, October 1, 1914, just after the closing of the first Keystone League of Christian Endeavor Convention held in Chicago, Illinois, September 25 to 30. The work among the young people of the church had progressed a great deal during the quadrennium. Dr. Daniel A. Poling gave good leadership to the Keystone League for two years. In 1912 he discontinued his active leadership with the denomination to become the General Secretary of the Ohio State Christian Endeavor Society. The Rev. W. E. Peffley, assistant editor of the Sunday School literature, was chosen Poling's successor and served as general secretary until 1922. Since 1922 he has served as editor of the Sunday School literature. The Rev. L. C. Hunt was named assistant editor of *The Evangelical* and of the Sunday School literature.

Due to the increased work of the bishops, Rudolph Dubs was elected as a third member of the episcopal board to serve with Bishops Fouke and Swengel who were reelected by this body. Fraternal relations were maintained with the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and with the Methodist Episcopal Church even though the plans for the merging with the Evangelical Association were rapidly approaching maturity.

The shortest general conference session in the history of the United Evangelical Church convened in Trinity Church, York, Pennsylvania, on October 3, 1918, and adjourned two days later because of an epidemic of influenza which swept across the country. Despite the abbreviation of time and strain of extraordinarily extended meetings, the necessary business was transacted and the more important matters given their due consideration.

On the afternoon of the second day of the conference the state authorities placed a quarantine sign on the church door and ordered an immediate adjournment. Through the intercession of the Hon. C. A. Schaffer, Dr. J. F. Dunlap, and the Rev. J. W. Thompson, with the city and state authorities, the conference was permitted to go into executive session and remain in session until 7:00 A. M. the following morning with brief intermissions for lunch, provided no one left the building. The women of the congregation served meals in the church building, one intermission for a brief rest and food occurring about midnight. Through strenuous application to the work in hand the general conference was able to complete its work and adjourn at 7:00 A. M. Saturday, as requested by the health authorities.

Since Bishops Swengel and Fouke had come to the time for retirement according to the rules of the church, W. F. Heil and M. T. Maze were chosen as their successors. The denomination gained almost

ten thousand members during the quadrennium, making this one of the most successful periods of its history. The church membership now numbered 89,271 and there were 145,153 enrolled in the Sunday Schools of the church. This quadrennium marked a great emphasis upon Christian education, the courses for ministers were revised and enlarged, the work of the Sunday Schools and the Keystone Leagues of Christian Endeavor were united under a general Board of Managers, and teacher-training classes were established in the local schools and summer camps.

The deaconess work of the denomination which was begun just a short time before was becoming a matter of much discussion and numerous congregations planned to use these deaconesses as pastor's assistants. A home for deaconesses was established in Baltimore, Maryland, and the Illinois Christian Training School in Chicago provided courses in Bible study and religious work for residents and those who desired to study by correspondence. This deaconess work, because of its many limitations, never became a large factor in the life of the denomination.

This general conference also established a War Service Commission, previously appointed by the bishops on November 1, 1917, to preserve the influence of the denomination on the lives of those called to the service of their country. Dr. H. Franklin Schlegel was named the executive secretary and through his efforts an accurate card file of all the men and women from the homes, schools, and churches, of the denomination who served their country during the World War was compiled. The names were catalogued by conferences and placed in a master alphabetical file. This commission formed the basis for constantly keeping the men in service in touch with their church. Many hundreds of copies of the New Testament were mailed to the soldiers and sailors in camps at home and abroad. To many of these persons *The Evangelical* was also sent. Letters went to each home in which a member was either wounded or killed in service. The executive secretary also handled all the applications from the ministers of this church for admission to the service of their country as chaplains. The files of *The National Service Commission of the United Evangelical Church*, as this organization was called after the close of the World War, are now preserved in the archives of the Historical Society and the work of this commission was combined with that of the permanent Temperance Committee.<sup>3</sup>

At this brief session a committee was appointed to set up a Forward Campaign in the United Evangelical Church with specific spiritual and material objectives. Because of the curtailed time for detailed consideration of the suggestions of the bishops in this matter, the committee was

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<sup>3</sup> *G.C.J.*, 1922, p. 48b, f.

empowered to set its objectives and devise means for their accomplishment.

The financial goal was set at \$200,000, but was later raised to \$1,000,000 which was then duly apportioned to the annual conferences and through them to the local congregations. Many of the objectives were reached and the Forward Campaign brought new zeal and activity into all the branches of the work of the church.

After the merging of the churches in 1922, the Rev. C. H. Stauffacher, the executive secretary of the Forward Campaign, and the Rev. J. W. Heininger, executive secretary of the Forward Movement, were reelected and carried the work of their respective movements to their completion during the next quadrennium.

## 77. THE KENTUCKY MOUNTAIN MISSION

The youngest of all the missionary ventures of the Evangelical Church is Red Bird Mission in the mountains of Kentucky. Bishop M. T. Maze and Dr. B. H. Niebel, then general secretary of the Missionary Society of the United Evangelical Church, explored the field and led the Board of Missions to open a mission in Beverly, Bell County, Kentucky in 1921. The Rev. J. J. DeWall, until then the pastor of the Hildreth Memorial Church of Le Mars, Iowa, was chosen as the superintendent and under his leadership of more than a decade the United Evangelical Church was able to establish a very significant educational, medical and evangelistic missionary service for these secluded people of the narrow mountain valleys, many of whose forefathers were among the earliest European settlers in America.

Other mission stations have now been established at Jack's Creek, ten miles north of Red Bird, at Beech Fork, and at strategic points throughout this mountain area now assigned to the Evangelical Church. Schools have also been constructed to give an opportunity for grade and high school training to the children of these mountains. The educational and medical work of these missionaries is real pioneer work and, in the recent years, graduates of the Evangelical schools of this area have come to enter the colleges and professional schools of our country. At least two young men from this Kentucky mission have now completed their college and seminary courses and are active pastors of the denomination. The evangelistic work of this mission has also been unusually fruitful, for in the comparatively few years of its existence the church membership roll has grown to 373 persons. The Rev. A. E. Lehman is the superintendent of this mission and he has as his helpers almost two score of doctors, nurses and teachers.

## 78. SEVERE LOSSES TO THE CHURCH

This quadrennium and the years immediately following, marked the loss of a number of prominent leaders of the denomination among



whom were Bishops Rudolph Dubs, C. S. Haman, W. M. Stanford, H. B. Hartzler, U. F. Swengel, W. H. Fouke, W. F. Heil and the Rev. Ammon Stapleton.

### Bishop Rudolph Dubs

Bishop Rudolph Dubs was born May 31, 1837, in Eich, near Worms, Germany. When he was about fifteen years of age he came to this country with his father and brother and together they located near Rock Grove, Illinois. He united with the Evangelical Association two years later in 1854 at the "Folgate Church" near Cedarville, Illinois. The following year he was licensed to preach and in 1856 received his first appointment as a member of the Illinois Conference. For fifty-nine consecutive years he served his church in many capacities from financial agent for Northwestern College to presiding elder, editor and bishop. In 1867 he was chosen the editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and eight years later as bishop. His name has appeared so frequently upon these pages so that in addition to this evidence of his prominence it remains only to be said here that Bishop Dubs was a churchman of unusual diplomacy, a scholar far above the average, and a forceful preacher. Bishop Dubs died March 31, 1915, aged almost seventy-eight years. His body lies buried at Paxtang, near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

### Bishop Christian Samuel Haman

Bishop Haman was born near Nazareth, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, March 14, 1832. In June, 1847, he was graduated from the Nazareth Hall Academy of the Moravian Church in Nazareth. The preceding November he had united with the church at Nazareth where in his eighteenth year he was elected an exhorter. He received his license to preach in 1854 and in 1855 was received into the itinerancy and assigned to his first appointment, junior preacher on Montgomery Circuit. His major service to the denomination was in the capacity of presiding elder in the East Pennsylvania Conference. At the time of the division of the church he was chosen as the presiding elder of the conference which met in Philadelphia in 1891, and was elected bishop there in which capacity he served for three years. After 1895 he served again as a district superintendent for at least eight years more. Bishop Haman died January 14, 1916.

### Bishop Wesley M. Stanford

Wesley M. Stanford was born in Rockland Township, Venango County, Pennsylvania, on May 15, 1846. For ten years after he was licensed to preach by the Pittsburgh Conference he served as a pastor and then in 1882 was elected as the assistant editor of *The Evangelical Messenger*. In 1889 he became the managing editor of *The Evan-*

*gelical* and two years later was chosen as one of the bishops of the newly formed United Evangelical Church. By law his term of office as a bishop was terminated in 1902 and at that time he was once more elected the editor of *The Evangelical*. After two terms in this capacity he was chosen as the editor of the Sunday School literature of his church in 1910 and filled this office until his retirement at the General Conference of 1922. He was a popular preacher and lecturer. He died April 8, 1923.

#### Bishop H. B. Hartzler

Henry Burns Hartzler was born near Yorkana, Pennsylvania, March 23, 1840, and was reared in an unusually happy background with rich religious influences. He was licensed to preach by the Central Pennsylvania Conference in 1869 and served in that area as a pastor until his election as the assistant editor of *The Evangelical Messenger* in 1875. Four years later he became the editor-in-chief of this organ in which capacity he served until 1887. He became an active leader in the United Evangelical Church from its beginning and was chosen a bishop by that body in 1902. He served his church as preacher, editor and poet as well as an administrator. He was popular as a lecturer at Bible conferences in his and other churches. His poems and hymns are still popular in the church. He died September 3, 1920.

#### Bishop U. F. Swengel

Uriah Franz Swengel was born near Middleburg, Pennsylvania, October 28, 1846, and was one of four brothers who became ministers. He was licensed to preach at the age of twenty-three and served his church thirty years as a pastor, twelve years as a presiding elder and eight years as a bishop, from 1910 to his retirement in 1918. In addition he had occupied the chair of the assistant editor of the Sunday School literature from 1884 to 1887 and of the editor in the United Evangelical Church from 1894 to 1898. He was greatly interested in the work among the young people and served as the chairman of the Managing Board of the Sunday Schools from 1902 to 1910. Bishop Swengel was a pioneer in the work of leadership training and wrote a textbook "*Modes and Methods of Work*" which became part of the Evangelical Normal Series. At the time of his death on March 8, 1921, he was still the president of the Board of Missions of his church.

#### Bishop William H. Fouke

William Hargrave Fouke was born in Shepherdstown, Virginia, October 30, 1851. The Illinois Conference granted him a license to preach in 1876 from which time he served his church for forty-seven years as pastor, presiding elder, general secretary and bishop. He

was one of the founders and the first president of the Keystone League of Christian Endeavor in 1891. From 1902 to 1910 he was the editor of the literature for Sunday Schools and Leagues and from 1910 to 1918 led the United Evangelical Church as one of her bishops. From 1918 until his retirement at the time of the merger in 1922 he served as the associate editor of *The Evangelical*. He died February 6, 1923.

### Bishop W. F. Heil

William Franklin Heil was born May 1, 1857, in Berlinville, Pennsylvania, and was granted a license to preach by the East Pennsylvania Conference in 1880. In 1890 he became a presiding elder and in 1902 was chosen a bishop of the United Evangelical Church. Upon retirement from the bishopric by law in 1910 he was chosen once again as a presiding elder. In 1918 he was again elected to the episcopacy until the merger in 1922. Thereafter he became a bishop of the Evangelical Congregational Church until 1926. He died November 6, 1930.

### Rev. Ammon Stapleton

On September 18, 1916, the Rev. Ammon Stapleton preached two sermons to his congregation at St. Paul's Church, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, and at two o'clock the following morning died in his sleep. Dr. Stapleton was born in Oley, Berks County, Pennsylvania, January 15, 1850. He was received into the Central Pennsylvania Conference in March, 1871, when he received his license to preach and served exclusively as a pastor for more than forty years. As the footnotes in this work and the bibliography in Appendix G indicate, Dr. Stapleton was a most prolific writer and one of the most expert historians of the denomination. His particular genius lay in his tireless persistence in seeking for details, the printed collections of which have proven of inestimable worth to the later historical writers.

Since almost all of the work of the general conference of the United Evangelical Church held in Barrington, Illinois, in October, 1922, had to do with the merging with the Evangelical Association its work will be considered appropriately in Chapter XI.



## CHAPTER X

### THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION—1891-1922

When the minority group withdrew from the Evangelical Association between the years 1891 and 1894 and formed the United Evangelical Church, the Evangelical Association, still less than a hundred years old, sustained irretrievable loss. Until that time the annual rate of growth of the Evangelical Association was from four to five percent and that almost without variance. With the loss of more than 50,000 members the Evangelical Association not only lost one-third of its membership, but the spirit and the momentum which had been carrying it forward from year to year with phenomenal success.

These losses were very keenly felt, for not only had the Evangelical Association lost so many of its ministers and members, but so many ministers and members became separated from each other and some very close friendships were lost. Many who had labored together, side by side in the same church and some almost for a lifetime, now gave their devotion and service to opposing groups and thereafter rarely found time or opportunity to keep alive their old friendships. Perhaps the very saddest part of all the years of the division of the church was the transformation of friendship into animosity and of coöperation into antagonism. Neither group, during the three decades that separated them, recovered the spiritual and material aggressiveness and success which they together had enjoyed before 1891.

Nevertheless this period did mark some forward steps in the Evangelical Association. During these thirty years the Young People's Alliance was formally accepted as a part of the general church, the Deacons Society was formally organized, the first denominational mission was begun in China, a more adequate provision for retired ministers was provided in the establishment of the Superannuation Fund, material aid was provided to help congregations erect proper church buildings in the creation of the Board of Church Extension, and, during the final quadrennium of the period, the Forward Movement was launched to vitalize the church, to retrieve the losses sustained during the World War, and to gather a large fund for missionary, educational, and benevolent purposes. Many of these advance movements, which for their planning and effective organization required the genius of churchmanship and diplomacy of the highest order, originated in the Board of Bishops and depended upon their most patient and competent leadership to bring them to their present prominent place of rich contribution to the life of the church.

This period (1891-1922) will be dealt with as a whole and the important actions of its seven sessions of the general conference will be set forth topically rather than chronologically.

## 79. SEVEN EPOCHAL GENERAL CONFERENCES

The sessions of the general conference during this period are marked with forward strides in organization, unequalled since the days when the denomination was first organized. Patience and painstaking care were needed to lay well the foundations of the modern organizations of the church. It was not unusual, therefore, during these formative sessions to have the general conference sit for three weeks and more without interruption. With the increase of the responsibility for leadership in 1891 the number of the bishops was increased to four. At this session, Bishop J. J. Esher and Thomas Bowman were reelected and S. C. Breyfogle and William Horn were chosen as the new bishops.

The important place of the episcopacy loomed even larger, especially during those strenuous days of conservation after the division and of reorganization and expansion in the latter quadrenniums. At some of the sessions each of the bishops informally addressed the general conference at the opening of the sessions even before the regular episcopal message was read. These informal addresses are usually printed in the *Journal* and provide a clear insight into the nature and work of the denomination. In 1899 Bishop Breyfogle delivered such an address before the twenty-second session of the general conference in which he outlined the genius of the Evangelical Church which he characterized as (1) the apostolic simplicity of her spirit, (2) the thoroughness of her character and work, (3) the aggressiveness of her missionary spirit, and (4) her consequent power for action.<sup>1</sup>

The formal episcopal message increased in length and worth as the quadrenniums went by. Usually there was a very careful analysis of all the activities of the denomination with particular emphasis upon those aspects of the work that needed most careful attention and others which provided new opportunities. At the session of 1919 the episcopal address was of such length as to fill eighty pages in the printed *Journal* and required parts of three meetings for its reading. These composite writings of the general superintendents in each case form a documentary picture of the church of the time and a good guide to the legislation which follows in the session. Although rarely dealing with doctrinal matters, these messages reveal better than any other source the trends of thought and life in the church.

The twenty-first session of the general conference was held in

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<sup>1</sup> *GCJ*, 1899, p. 17f.

Elgin, Illinois, beginning October 3, 1895,<sup>2</sup> when Bishop J. J. Esher called the conference to order and delivered the opening address. Although there were still a few cases of litigation over church property which remained unsettled, the division of the church for the most part was a fact accepted by all and which no longer claimed the major attention of the officials of the Evangelical Association. Although it was practically impossible a quadrennium earlier to ascertain the exact strength of the church, it was now rather accurately determined that the membership of the Evangelical Association was 110,095 members and 982 itinerant ministers. After only four years the Young People's Alliance had established 1,695 organizations in local churches and had enrolled 26,162 members. The enrollment in the Sunday Schools in 1895 totalled 126,318.<sup>3</sup>

That these leaders of the church considered seriously their quadrennial statistical reports is indicated by the fact that in the *Journals* of this period analytical and comparative tables frequently appear. As late as 1915, a commission was authorized to make a survey of the territory embraced by the church to ascertain in what growing centers of population and unoccupied rural communities the denomination was not yet represented. This action was aimed especially at overcoming the loss of members who move into localities where there is no Evangelical church. This commission was also charged with the study of the rural church problem and asked to devise a system whereby the changes in residence of members moving into a new community may be recorded in Cleveland and notice sent to the pastors in cities or communities in which these members have settled.<sup>4</sup>

## 80. THE DEVELOPING ORGANIZATION

### a. The Young People's Alliance

In this period the Young People's Alliance made phenomenal progress, increasing in numbers as rapidly as similar youth group movements in other denominations. It was not until 1907 that the Rev. F. C. Berger was chosen the first full time general secretary of the Alliance and Sunday Schools, and was succeeded in 1919 by E. W. Praetorius. Although manuals and guides for work among young people had previously been written by the Revs. C. A. Thomas, J. C. Hornberger and Christian Staebler, Rev. F. C. Berger prepared a more extensive guide

<sup>2</sup> Since we are dealing with this period as a whole and will analyze the important actions of the conference in a topical rather than chronological arrangement, we will not hereafter list the time and place of each of the general conferences. This information may be found in Appendix D.

<sup>3</sup> For a careful study of the statistics of this as well as other periods, see Appendix F.

<sup>4</sup> *GCJ*, 1915, p. 181f.



book which first appeared in 1914. This new guide was revised several times, a third edition appearing in Cleveland early in 1919. Throughout the entire denomination the Young People's Alliance came to be the accepted form of organization for the youth groups of each congregation, and very few congregations of the denomination were without one or more age groups of the Alliance. Usually regular meetings for worship and discussion were held in the church for a period of an hour before the Sunday evening worship. In many instances it also came to be the custom to conduct a business, literary and social meeting at the home of one of the members at least once each month. The rapid growth and development of this work may well be observed in the statistical summary at the close of paragraph 71 in Chapter VIII and in the graphical study in Appendix F.

### b. The Deaconess Society

Realizing the value of religious work by consecrated women, the leaders of the Evangelical Association had given serious thought to the matter of organizing a society for deaconesses and in 1899 this matter was referred to a committee for study.<sup>5</sup> The excellent results of such work done by Christian women in Europe and among some of the larger denominations in this country led the members of the General Conference of 1903 to plan for the Deaconess Society of the Evangelical Association and also permitted annual conferences to organize auxiliary societies within their own conference area.<sup>6</sup>

Following the plan suggested in 1903, the society was organized and took over the Chicago Deaconess Home as its headquarters. This plant, worth \$40,000, was formally dedicated by Bishop Thomas Bowman on November 2, 1905. The constitution for the society was adopted in 1907.<sup>7</sup> By 1911 the work of the society had grown and the needs had become so great that a challenging call was issued throughout the church for young women who would volunteer for this type of work.

This work among the deaconesses in this country developed so rapidly that by 1926 four hospitals and Deaconess Society Homes were sponsored by the church. These institutions were located in Chicago, Ill., Freeport, Ill., Monroe, Wis., and Waterloo, Iowa. The superintendents of the Deaconess Society have been A. J. Vogelein, J. H. Bauernfeind and A. J. Byas.

During the years of depression, these institutions found less and less support in their respective communities while city and government hospitals increased rapidly. Through inadequacy of support from the denomination and the community, these institutions were discontinued

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<sup>5</sup> *GCFJ*, 1899, p. 93.

<sup>6</sup> *GCFJ*, 1903, p. 127f.

<sup>7</sup> *GCFJ*, 1907, p. 171f.

or disposed of one by one, until finally in 1938 plans were laid for the complete liquidation of the Deaconess Society.

### c. The Board of Church Extension

The creation of a Board of Church Extension was recommended to the General Conference of 1899 by Bishop Breyfogel who had prepared a very carefully drawn plan for its function and support. That conference ordered the establishment of such a board and chose Rev. W. A. Leopold the first executive secretary. The function of this board, is to provide a revolving fund from which needy congregations may borrow for the purpose of erecting new church buildings and parsonages. The General Conference of 1899 immediately pledged the sum of \$10,000 which has been increased to approximately one-half a million dollars in the forty years of its existence. Throughout the years this fund has been loaned to needy congregations at a low rate of interest to aid in securing adequate and needed buildings for the church.

### d. Other Organizations

Realizing a particular need for the guidance of the study of the ministers in all parts of the church, the Evangelical Correspondence College was organized by the denomination in 1895. Its chief sponsor, Bishop S. C. Breyfogel, remained the head of the school until it was discontinued in 1919.<sup>8</sup>

From the very beginning of its history, the Evangelical Association knew the value of the printed page. Many of the first printed materials were devotional and promotional pamphlets which were very widely distributed throughout the church. In an attempt to carry this work much farther and promote the writing of such materials, the general conference in 1863 established the Sunday School and Tract Union as one of its regular institutions and elected Reuben Yeakel its first editor.<sup>9</sup> This agency has rendered a valuable although silent service throughout the years, aiding in the publication of most of the denominational books and tracts, and in furnishing needy Sunday Schools with literature. The Evangelical Bible Society was organized in 1919 to spread the influence of the Scriptures still more and particularly to provide Bibles and New Testaments for churches and communities which might not otherwise be able to secure them.

During these years the Sunday Schools of the Evangelical Association showed splendid increases in attendance and also in the educational standard of their work. The work of training leaders was systematically organized in a three year Teacher Training Course with specially prepared textbooks. The expansion of this work greatly helped the Sunday

<sup>8</sup> *GCIJ*, 1919, pp. 232, 238, 261; also 1911, p. 166.

<sup>9</sup> *GCIJ*, 1863, pp. 30, 46, 54.

Schools and Young People's Societies of the church. Constitutions for the Board of Sunday Schools and for the Board of Control of the Young People's Alliance were adopted in 1915. In this same year the closely related Board of Education was founded for the closer integration of the denomination's work through schools of higher learning.

## 81. MISSIONS

The missionary work of the denomination also prospered during the years 1891 to 1922. The Board of Missions at its annual session in 1898 instructed the Rev. F. W. Vogelein to visit China with a view to a careful study of the opportunities for missionary work in that country. His report<sup>10</sup> was so optimistic that the General Conference of 1899 immediately appointed a committee to consider the feasibility of establishing such a mission. At its next quadrennial session this body ordered the establishing of a mission field in Hunan Province, China.<sup>11</sup> Among the prominent missionaries in this field were C. E. Ranck, Albert Butzbach and E. Kelhöfer. This work in China was continued until after 1922 when it was merged with the strong mission base of the former United Evangelical Church there.

In 1915 Bishop S. C. Breyfogel made an episcopal visit to the mission fields in the Orient. At this time the seminary which the Evangelical Church had maintained in Japan was merged with Aoyama Gakuin, the theological seminary of the Methodist Church there. Since that time the Evangelical Church has been represented by at least one person on the faculty of that institution.<sup>12</sup>

After fifteen years as a mission of the Evangelical Association, the body of workers in Germany was organized into the Germany Conference at a meeting held in the Jewish synagogue in Stuttgart in 1865. Then there were but six ministers; the three American missionaries, J. G. Wollpert, J. P. Schnatz and John Walz, together with three native German ministers, G. Fuessle, M. Erdle, and C. Eisenhart. By 1899 this work had grown so rapidly that it was one of the strongest conferences in the denomination in point of numbers, having more than eighty ministers in the active service.<sup>13</sup> In the two decades following the Evangelical Association in Germany grew more moderately.

At the sessions of the first German Annual Conference in Stuttgart in 1865, Gottlieb Fuessle was appointed missionary to Switzerland. Three years later a missionary was sent into Alsace. By 1868 the work in Switzerland had prospered so splendidly that a presiding elder was

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<sup>10</sup> *GCJ*, 1899, pp. 57-67.

<sup>11</sup> *GCJ*, 1903, p. 108.

<sup>12</sup> *GCJ*, 1915, pp. 44, 59, 189, 192; also 1919, p. 120.

<sup>13</sup> *GCJ*, 1899, p. 29.



chosen to supervise that work. In 1879, eleven years later, the Switzerland Conference was organized.

## 82. THE FORWARD MOVEMENT

In a supreme effort to challenge the denomination to a forward outlook and stride in all branches of the work of the church and especially to strengthen the financial resources of its institutions, the General Conference of 1919 launched the Forward Movement, quite likely the most intensive campaign of expansion and enlargement of the influence of this body ever attempted in her history. "The whole church in a Forward Movement with Christ as our leader and a place in the ranks for you" became the challenging slogan adopted for the movement. The specific objectives striven for and in the large really attained through these efforts included (1) an enrichment of the prayer life of the church membership, (2) an evangelistic campaign throughout the denomination which should lead one hundred thousand souls to conversion and one hundred thousand additions to the church rolls, (3) the commitment of young people to life service in the church including a call for five hundred young men for the Christian ministry, (4) a better trained and more effective ministry for the church, (5) church wide education on Christian Stewardship, (6) a five year program of expansion in home and foreign missions, (7) an enlargement of the scope, size, and influence of the educational institutions of the church, and (8) a gathering of gifts for all purposes and agencies of the denomination to amount to \$2,500,000.

The general conference spent many hours in careful preparation for the launching of this important work and chose as the central committee to guide the movement Bishops S. C. Breyfogel, S. P. Spreng, G. Heinmiller, and L. H. Seager, F. W. Ramsay, Edwin Heina, J. W. Heininger, W. L. Bollman, H. E. Bohner, C. R. Rall, E. F. Kimmel, A. M. Doll, J. P. Hauch, George Johnson, Fred Magsig, B. R. Wiener, J. R. Niergarth and E. W. Praetorius. L. H. Seager was chosen the executive secretary of the movement, J. R. Niergarth, assistant secretary, F. W. Ramsay, the chairman of the Central Committee, and J. W. Heininger, business manager. One of the most striking features of this whole movement was the unusual way in which outstanding laymen, under the masterful leadership of F. W. Ramsay, took part in this movement. This lay participation gave an increased importance to the position of the laity in the denomination.

Spiritual conferences were held in numerous centers throughout the church, material interests were benefited, and all through the church a new spirit came to the fore which has left the denomination enlarged and empowered for a larger service.

## 83. ON EVANGELISM AND EDUCATION

During the closing years of the last century, the thoughtful leaders of the denomination came more and more to be perplexed by the problem of winning and holding the children and young people in the church. Not the smallest difficulty in this matter was the question of the relationship of the children to the church. On Tuesday, October 10, 1899, at the twenty-second session of the general conference then meeting in Emanuel Church in St. Paul, Minnesota, J. C. Brendel, speaking for the Wisconsin Conference delegation, requested the conference to "define the relation of children to our Church."<sup>14</sup> A committee of three, consisting of Bishop J. J. Esher, G. Fritsche, and S. P. Spreng, was appointed to consider this important question and two days later brought the following report which was adopted and ordered printed in the *Discipline* so that the entire church might realize the importance of its responsibility for the children of the church:

"Children belong to Christ and are under Him as the head of redeemed humanity, namely the holy universal church of God. Christ Himself has placed them within the inner circle of His church by His declaration 'of such is the Kingdom of God'; therefore, they are to be received by the Church into her visible organic union by holy baptism and to be regarded as belonging to her fold and as objects of her solicitude and pastoral care.

"Therefore, also, the children of our church members, who have received holy baptism are to be especially regarded as belonging to our own Church, by Christian instruction and godly training to be led into living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to conscious experience of salvation, and then, upon their own free will, and choice, be received as members into our Church communion, in accordance with the rules, regulations, and order of our Church for the reception of members."<sup>14</sup>

Although there had been a very keen sense of responsibility for the Christian nurture of children from the very beginning of the denomination, when John Dreisbach translated a catechism into the German as early as 1809, there was never until this time a more adequate statement than this pronouncement in 1899.

The spirit which prompted the request for a statement from the general conference on the relation of children to the church was prevalent in the closing years of the nineteenth century because of the greater emphasis being placed upon Christian education by the various denominational and interdenominational agencies. The International and State Sunday School Associations and the International Society of Christian Endeavor were constantly stimulating such considerations. At the meet-

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<sup>14</sup> *GCIJ*, 1899, pp. 51, 109, 72 and 124f.

ings of the Evangelical Section of the Congress of Religions held in Chicago in 1893, Mrs. H. C. Smith of Naperville, Illinois, stressed the great responsibility of parents for the religious nurture of their children.<sup>15</sup> A strong appeal for the acceptance of this responsibility for the Christian education of their children and the creation of the right spirit in the Christian home was published in *The Evangelical Messenger*:

"The family is the oldest institution and withal the most important. . . . The home is the very citadel of morals. The sanctity of fatherhood in man and motherhood in woman should ever be kept from trailing in impurity. . . . The family ties, interest, mission, influence and usefulness must be jealously guarded by the church and our nation, for with its decay is connected the decay and downfall of this nation. . . . The character of the family and its life decides the character and life of the nation."<sup>16</sup>

The evangelistic as well as the educational responsibility weighed heavily upon the leaders of the church during the first years of the twentieth century and by the meeting of the general conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1907, the denomination was ready to follow the suggestion of Bishop S. C. Breyfogel to establish the Commission of Evangelism. This commission consisted of twenty-five members of whom seventeen were ministers and eight laymen. Its function was defined and its objectives stated as follows:

"To endeavor by much prayer and diligence and humble reliance upon the Holy Spirit,—to assist in cultivating and in maintaining such a spirit of evangelism in our Church as to lead preachers and people to pray for and expect conversions daily, the year round.

"To bring, through the agency of our ministers, the Sunday School, the Young People's Alliance, and by direct individual appeal, to the young men of the church, the claims of the ministry.

"To enlist as much as possible, every waiting talent and gift in the Church and to direct it into those paths for which it is called and to which it is adapted, whether in the home or foreign field, in deaconess work or among the foreigners in our midst.

"To suggest methods by which congregations, when there is more than one in the same city, may most effectively unite their efforts in soul-saving endeavor.

"To enlist active business men, old and young, and those in other secular pursuits, for a larger and more direct participation in the spiritual advancement of the Church.

". . . to study the problem of missionary work among the foreigners in the United States and Canada, and to coöperate with the Board of Missions and the Woman's Missionary Society in this endeavor.

<sup>15</sup> Knobel, G. C., *The Congress of the Evangelical Association*, Cleveland, 1894, p. 196f.

<sup>16</sup> *EM*, 1896, p. 241.



" . . . to study carefully the great problems of city evangelization; the most judicious and effective manner of establishing new mission churches and Sunday Schools in cities, towns and country districts; of giving relief to the crying need of workers in missionary conferences and districts and to inquire carefully into the methods of other denominations moving along these great lines.

" . . . to communicate to the church, by means of the church papers, tracts and booklets, the results of its inquiries and conclusions."<sup>17</sup>

While this commission was designed to meet annually and perform its functions through its officers and executive committee and in co-operation with all the agencies of the denomination, it was specifically understood from the beginning that it would not have the power to usurp or conflict with the functions of the regular agencies of the church and that its real function was purely inspirational and advisory. The large interpretation of evangelism soon bound together many of the otherwise loosely connected agencies of the church so that, sensing the tremendous need for the winning of mankind to the way of Christianity, the young and old of the church alike came to engage enthusiastically in a program that was to lead the denomination forward in all the branches of its work.

By the end of its first quadrennium of service, the Commission on Evangelism was given further responsibility by the general conference which convened in the East 75th Street church in Cleveland in 1911. That body resolved,

"that the Commission on Evangelism shall be directed to establish a Bureau of Literature which shall be conducted for the purpose of dealing with questions and recommending books and literature which successfully meet and correct perverted tendencies of present day religious thought.

"The Commission shall also maintain a Bureau of Social Service for the purpose of suggestion and assistance in solving social problems, i. e., Socialism, how to get into closer touch with the working man, etc."<sup>18</sup>

While these social and theological responsibilities were added to the functions of the Commission on Evangelism, they never formed a major portion of its work. The whole church was becoming conscious particularly of the necessity of winning the young people for Christ and so, in addition to the active program of this commission, there frequently appeared in the church press such appeals as,

"Careful inquiry covering a number of leading Sunday Schools discovers the fact that when there is right planning and devoted effort,

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<sup>17</sup> *GCJ*, 1907, p. 99.

<sup>18</sup> *GCJ*, 1911, p. 144.

the waste is largely eliminated and the young people held happily to the Sunday School and church membership.

"(1) The stronger men and women of the church must consecrate their business ability and heart strength to the teaching and management of classes of this age.

"(2) In addition to the spiritual life, adequate provision must be made by the church for the physical, intellectual and social life of these young people. To leave these three sides of their life unguarded is to surrender these channels of previous opportunity to the enemy. Gymnasiums, game and reading rooms are good, plus the presence of those of the church who are wise enough to use this open approach to a young person's life.

"(3) This is supremely the organizing age. The church should harness its activity to the best ideals for life and service. The organized class and the many helpful organizations especially fitted for the 'teen years should be utilized.

"(4) The study of the Bible for these critical years must be made worthwhile. The best church workers come from among those who became interested in the higher things of life during the 'teen' age.

"(5) The presence in the Sunday School of the men and women of the Church in large numbers will cure the notion that the Sunday School is a children's affair. The presence of business men will be especially helpful in convincing the growing boy and young man that the Sunday School is a man's job. It is not enough that the Sunday School give attention to the scholars in this difficult and trying age; that officials of the Church—the whole Church—must give thought to the young people of the Church family. 'It is better to build a fence around the top of the precipice than to have an ambulance at the bottom.'

"(6) In the program to save for service the young people of the generation that is with us, to pilot them wisely through the rapids of the 'teens to the harbor of their maturity, the appeal is made for the immediate and earnest coöperation of the whole Church. No investment will yield as much for the Church of the present and the future." <sup>19</sup>

Even the young people themselves came to sense the important responsibility which they shared for the winning of the world for Christ. They were constantly reminding themselves of their objectives in the Senior and Junior Societies when at each meeting they repeated the pledge of their group. The high standard kept constantly before these children is shown in the Junior pledge:

"I do hereby promise, with the help of God to try always to do the right; to pray every day; to read every day in the Word of God; to abstain from profane language, from the use of tobacco and from all intoxicant liquors." <sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> EM, March 22, 1911.

<sup>20</sup> Staebler, Christian, *Junior Manual of the Young People's Alliance*, p. 153.

The objectives of the Seniors led them to promote the religious, intellectual and social culture of the young members and friends of the church and to train young people in Christian living and for effective Christian service in the church. One of the most enthusiastic leaders of this work among the young people of the Evangelical Church from the beginning of the movement was the Rev. C. A. Thomas who stated their objective in this way to the Evangelical Congress in Chicago in 1893:

"The Young People's Alliance purposes to educate the young members of the Church, and such as are friendly to it, spiritually and religiously. The time of youth is the time of development. Both heart and mind are to be filled with the elements of Christian education and experience. The character is to be more and more exercised in that which is good and be made like the character of Christ. The more thoroughly a young person is religiously educated the more steadfast and useful he will become in life. Our time demands knowledge. The world itself strives after education. The youth of our Church should not stay behind nor desire so to do. And our Young People's Alliance has assumed this aim as its special task. In the four departments: Christian Work, Literary Culture, Sympathy and Relief, and Christian Entertainment are thoroughly carried out; the Alliance must reach its high aim; it cannot be otherwise."<sup>21</sup>

While the Young People's Alliance of the Evangelical Association was stressing the well rounded evangelistic emphasis of their work, the leaders of the young people of the United Evangelical Church were striving toward similar objectives through the Keystone League of Christian Endeavor. Particularly strong emphasis upon the proper nurture of the children of the church was expressed by Bishop W. M. Stanford before the First General Sunday School and Keystone League of Christian Endeavor Convention of the United Evangelical Church held in Chicago in September 25-30, 1914, when he spoke on "The Conservation of Childhood," and said:

"In this one thing, if we could only believe it, and act accordingly, lies the deep secret of a constantly growing and prosperous church. Take proper care of the child, and that same child, in its turn, will later take care of the church. What we need to do more than anything else, is to begin our Christian work at the right place and at the right time."<sup>22</sup>

A similar sense of responsibility for the children of the church was also apparent in the minds of the bishops of the Evangelical Associa-

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<sup>21</sup> C. A. Thomas in Knobel, G. C., *op. cit.*, p. 238.

<sup>22</sup> Munday, Robert G. (editor), *Report of the First General Sunday School and K. L. C. E. Convention of the United Evangelical Church*, Harrisburg, 1915, p. 88.



tion in 1919 when a liberal section of the episcopal message to the general conference which met in Cedar Falls, Iowa, was devoted to their consideration.

"The child still stands in the midst of the Church and the Nation as the chief concern of both. Its appeal transcends every other in the whole social structure. Destroy the child by false treatment or neglect and you have rent the entire social nexus. In home, in school and at play the child is upon the conscience of the community as well as of the parent. Moral safeguards and religious training are as essential and incomparably more so than the education provided by our schools. Here the church has the highest responsibility."<sup>23</sup>

That these bishops concerned themselves not only with the statement of general principles is clearly evident for in the very next paragraphs they appealed to the leaders of the denomination to work diligently to help overcome child labor in industry. In this connection these churchmen stated beautifully what could be counted readily as the dominating philosophy of the denomination regarding children,

"The child is the gift of God to each generation for nurture, training and ennoblement."<sup>23</sup>

This emphasis on evangelism was to be found in all the books, pamphlets and periodicals of the denomination as well as in the organizations of the church. Even the practical handbooks of the denominational agencies sponsored plans for personal evangelism. The Manual of the Young People's Alliance published only in 1919 contained a chapter 29 on "Evangelism through the Young People's Alliance." Following immediately after it was a chapter on "The Bible Reader's Course" in which the general secretary, the Rev. E. W. Praetorius, suggested that the young people of the church should engage in devotional, practical and literary Bible study, paying especial attention to (1) the atmosphere in which they study, (2) the record of their daily meditations, (3) memorizing the Scriptures, and (4) sharing the values of their reading and study. Here was another serious attempt to perpetuate even in the young people of the church the serious understanding of the chief mission of the church, which was so prevalent in this denomination now for over a century, and also to prepare these young leaders practically to perform this mission effectively.

#### 84. RECENT SOCIAL ISSUES

Two wars darkened the horizon during this period. Although the Spanish-American War was of comparatively brief duration, it involved a number of members of the church and brought forth from the various conferences expressions deploring war as a method of settling inter-

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<sup>23</sup> *G.C.J.*, 1919, p. 48f.

national disputes. Usually there was also an expression of gratitude for victory in the conflict with Spain.

In October 1915, a year after the outbreak of the World War in Europe, the general conference of the Evangelical Association gathered in its twenty-sixth session at Los Angeles, and called upon the members of the church "to pray unceasingly for the peace of the world." The situation was all the more complicated because, in addition to Canada, four nations in which the Evangelical Association had pastors and churches were at war. The point of stress at this conference and during the next few months was peace and "sympathy in thought and deed" for those involved in war.

However with the increasing propaganda for greater military strength, a division of opinion arose in the church as is well pointed out by Bishop S. C. Breyfogel in an article in *The Evangelical-Messenger* on January 5, 1916. The next months produced articles decrying and deploring unfair profiteering and exorbitant prices and profits for men in business.<sup>24</sup>

When the United States actually became involved in the World War many leaders of the church supported the war and money raising campaigns unreservedly. Many resolutions were passed like this one of the Iowa Conference which clearly supported the government and rationalized their position by appealing to the war service of Jacob Albright.

"We have read our country's call. We have witnessed the response of her brave-hearted sons. We are captivated by their spirit of unselfish loyalty and cheerful courageous devotion in this hour of their country's dire distress. Among them, too, are many sons of the members of this conference also several of our brothers in the ministry.

"Besides we are proud of the fact that our Church is distinctively an American product; its founder, Jacob Albright, was born in America and himself was a soldier in the Revolutionary War.

"Furthermore having hitherto enjoyed the blessings of freedom of conscience and liberty of action, the coveted prize of every nation, we therefore pledge our most sincere coöperation with and support of our noble army of young men now in the service and of those yet to be called, to the full extent of our power and influence, by our prayers, means and effort.

"We pledge our loyalty and cheerful support to our Government and to the President of these United States in these days of trial and responsibility; but while we maintain a spirit of unflinching loyalty and uncompromising faithfulness to our own cause and country, we nevertheless assure all peoples and nations of the world of our earnest and only desire toward them of good will and a speedy universal peace." <sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *EM*, September 19, 1917.

<sup>25</sup> *EM*, April 17, 1918.

But with the passing again to a period of peace after 1918, the Evangelical Church joined the Christians of other churches in supporting the greatest movement toward world peace known in history.

The very next general conference in 1922, through its committee on Family and Public Morals adopted a strong statement of policy looking toward world peace:

"Because very little can be done to prevent war by the individual or the denomination standing alone, we, therefore, favor national and international organizations that will include all Christian denominations producing public sentiment that shall influence governments in times of crises to revert to arbitration rather than to arms." <sup>26</sup>

That the bishops of the denomination once again felt the spirit of their fathers, who as early as 1816 had declared war and the shedding of blood incompatible with the gospel and the spirit of Christ, is evident in the challenge of the episcopal message of 1926:

"This is the opportunity of the church to cultivate in the minds of men in every part of the world an international conscience which will demand the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means, and immortalize on the pages of history and in halls of fame not only those made illustrious in war but also the heroes of a world peace founded upon the principles of justice, liberty and humanity. The Church cannot do otherwise and remain true to the teachings of Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace." <sup>27</sup>

The Evangelical Association has constantly striven to make the church not only a means of inspiration for her membership in times of war, but a guide as well in times of peace. The committees of the annual and general conferences at each meeting without fail stressed the need for the proper Christian observance of the Sunday as a day of rest and quiet so that members might live more happily and work more efficiently at other times. Social unrest during this period required much careful thought for the personal guidance of members involved in these points of tension of the industrial world. Like the United Evangelical Church, the Evangelical Association was not content with passing resolutions but through its own agencies and pastors strove to secure better working conditions for labor and especially to outlaw child labor.

In coöperation with the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America of which the denomination is a part, *The Evangelical Messenger* printed what was the mind of most of the church in these matters:

"We deem it the duty of all Christian people to concern themselves

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<sup>26</sup> *GCJ*, 1922.

<sup>27</sup> *GCJ*, 1926, p. 52f.



directly with certain practical industrial problems. To us it seems that the churches must stand:

(1) For equal rights and complete justice to all men in all stations of life.

(2) For the right of all men to the opportunity for self-maintenance, a right ever to be strongly safeguarded against encroachments of every kind.

(3) For the right of workers to some protection against the hardships often resulting from the swift crises of industrial change.

(4) For the principle of conciliation and arbitration in industrial disputes.

(5) For the protection of the worker from dangerous machinery, occupational disease, injuries and mortality.

(6) For the abolition of child labor.

(7) For the regulations of the condition of toil for women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.

(8) For the suppression of the community sweating system.

(9) For the gradual and reasonable reduction of the hours of labor to the lowest practicable point for that degree of leisure for all which is a condition of the highest human life.

(10) For the release from employment one day in seven.

(11) For a living wage as a minimum in every industry and for the highest wage that each industry can afford.

(12) For the most equitable division of the products of industry that can ultimately be devised.

(13) For the suitable provision for the old age of the workers and for those incapacitated by injury.

(14) For the abatement of poverty.

(15) To the toilers of America and to those who by organized effort are seeking to lift the crushing burdens of the poor, and to reduce the hardships and uphold the dignity of labor, this Council sends the greeting of human brotherhood and the pledge of sympathy and of help in a cause which belongs to all who follow Christ.<sup>28</sup>

In 1919 the bishops said in their quadrennial message:

"Let us meet the industrial challenge from a sane and distinctively Christian standpoint, arraying ourselves against seven days' work and an unreasonable number of hours each day, for the better protection of working men against accidents, for sanitary conditions in factories and for moral restraints in places where workers of both sexes are employed.

"Let the church stand for the square deal as between employer and the employees and a living wage as a minimum and the best wages each industry or business can afford for workers and salaried employees in order that men and their families may have comfortable and sanitary housing, ample nourishment, adequate clothing, the means to educate their children, sufficient leisure to afford opportunity for Christian service and other forms of self-improvement, and to provide for the future.

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<sup>28</sup> *EM*, August 30, 1911.

"We stand for the humanizing of industrial relations and the mutual approach of employer and employees on the basis and in the recognition of a common humanity. To regard each other as necessarily belonging to different classes between which in the nature of things there must always be the clash of interests if not industrial war, is a fatal attitude of mind. Men must learn to trust each other and to be regardful of each other's interests in this as in all other relations in life. There is a place here for leadership of an unusual character. The church should supply that leadership for the Christianizing of all social relations.

"The church must be a friend of the employer with his enormous burden of responsibility, of the industrial worker in his struggle in life, of the men and women wearing away their lives behind counters of commerce, and of the toilers on the farm, in the office and counting room. Our attitude must be one of undying interest in all classes of men and women and of unceasing demand for justice and a fair opportunity for all."<sup>29</sup>

Recognizing the tendency among some public officials toward laxness in performing their duties, the leaders of the church in 1886 urged all men in public life to live by the same high standard which they expected of others:

"We unqualifiedly condemn a dual standard of conduct, lower in public life than that demanded by the highest ideals of private life."<sup>30</sup>

Even the approach to the matter of temperance was based upon a major consideration for humanity rather than upon the enforcement of some inherited precept. Labor difficulties were frequently blamed upon the ignorance and intemperance of one or the other parties involved in disputes. One person wrote:

"We believe that a great end would be gained considering it only as a matter of economy . . . if more attention were paid to the education of the laborer and his children. Since ignorance and intemperance go hand in hand, a double project would be gained by combining temperance work with education."<sup>31</sup>

The Evangelical Association, having carefully studied the problems of moral evils and their resulting dereliction of character, was one of the leaders among the churches in America to recognize the close relation that vices sustain to one another and openly pronounced against them in a connected fashion and worked to eradicate all of them. In 1894 the general conference said:

"We favor the enacting and enforcing of stringent civil and ecclesiastical laws against the manufacture and sale of intoxicating beverages,

<sup>29</sup> *GCJ*, 1919, p. 66f.

<sup>30</sup> *EM*, 1886, p. 464.

<sup>31</sup> *GCJ*, 1907, p. 153.

gambling, houses of ill fame, the publishing of obscene literature and all the vices of corrupting literature.”<sup>32</sup>

When the use of narcotics became prevalent, the church leaders urged “the most drastic restrictions against the illicit traffic in drugs.”<sup>33</sup>

To clarify a point in ritualistic procedure and to be consistent with her advocacy of total abstinence the General Conference of 1907 ruled that in the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper only unfermented wine should be used.<sup>34</sup>

In the denomination many became helpful leaders of the forces working for the adoption of the prohibition amendment. With the repeal of the eighteenth amendment, the leaders of the church have consistently maintained that the work must be continued until some other way has been discovered to prevent the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors.

All through the years of her history, the Evangelical Association stressed economy, proper humility of spirit, and propriety in dress and conduct which was not lost during the last generations of the growth of the church. Especially with the burden of lean years for employers and employees, the church advised,

“We are in favor of domestic economy as against glaring extravagance that leads many to live above their means, making debts they are not able to pay, and bringing reproach upon themselves and reflection upon the cause of the Lord.”<sup>35</sup>

Still more personal yet entirely within the province for guidance and direction by the church were the problems of home and family life, particularly the sanctity of the marriage vows. At the very beginning of this period the church favored uniform marriage and divorce laws for all the states, such as would be in harmony with the Word of God.<sup>36</sup> At the next session of the general conference the bishops were appointed “with authority to petition the Congress of these United States in the name of the general conference and the Evangelical Association, to enact uniform marriage and divorce laws, based upon the moral law and explicit teaching of Christ regarding the matter.”<sup>37</sup> One year later *The Evangelical Messenger* published a suggested guide for young persons with a view to overcoming the interesting problem of the more and more numerous divorce proceedings throughout the country. It was suggested, in order

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<sup>32</sup> *G CJ*, 1894, p. 164.

<sup>33</sup> *G CJ*, 1922, p. 80.

<sup>34</sup> *G CJ*, 1907, p. 133.

<sup>35</sup> *G CJ*, 1894, p. 166.

<sup>36</sup> *G CJ*, 1891, p. 54f.

<sup>37</sup> *G CJ*, 1895, p. 78.



"To diminish the number of divorces

(1) Let there be due attention to the habits, character, aims, ancestry of the parties contemplating betrothal. Let the courtship continue long enough until both parties are satisfied that they can walk together through life. Such parties should make haste slowly, and when once engaged should stick to the engagement.

(2) If differences occur after marriage, bear and forbear.

(3) Let both parties become affianced and married in the fear of God.

(4) Guard jealously against the little foxes which try to gnaw at the peace and happiness of the domestic life.

(5) Abhor the very thought of a divorce and only resort to it in the case of absolute necessity.

(6) Let the law make it more difficult to get a divorce.

(7) Let all parties concerned think of the account they must give to God."<sup>38</sup>

This advice, while not particularly new or unusual to the young people of the Evangelical Association, is an indication of a trend in the thinking of the leaders of the church which had much to do with the wholesome attitude toward the sanctity of marriage and which also is one of the reasons for a minimum of divorces among the members of the church.

The Evangelical Association has from its beginning been very vitally interested in the relation of religion and life and during the last half century especially has entered actively into the struggle to build a practical Christianity by overcoming the forces which hinder such religious development.

## 85. TRENDS IN CHRISTIAN THINKING

The period from the division to the reunion was rather fruitful for the creative thinkers and writers of the denomination. Although Bishop J. J. Esher was already past seventy years of age the General Conference of 1895 commissioned him to prepare a Systematic Theology which should represent the theological position of the Evangelical Association. At the same conference Reuben Yeakel was instructed to prepare a work on the history, doctrine and disciplinary teaching of the denomination.<sup>38a</sup>

In 1899, Bishop Esher reported that the first two volumes of his *Christliche Theologie* had been completed and that the third volume had been begun. Because of his death in April, 1901, he was not privileged to see this work in its completed form. However, this third volume was on the press and he had already completed the reading of

<sup>38</sup> *EM*, 1896, p. 273.

<sup>38a</sup> *GCJ*, 1895, p. 71f.

the proof of about three hundred of its pages. The final editing and indexing of the volume fell to Editor G. Heinmiller who saw this important work through the press.

This work of fifteen hundred pages is the most extensive of its kind as yet produced in the Evangelical Association, and covers, in detailed analysis, the entire field of systematic thought in Christian theology. The first volume, after a preparatory introduction, consists of five chapters dealing with The Bible, The Teaching of God, The Work of God, Angels and Man. The seven chapters of the second volume cover the topics: Sin; Salvation; The Person of Christ; The Two Positions of Christ (His Humiliation and His Exaltation); The Mediatorship of Christ as Prophet, Priest and King; Sonship and Salvation through Christ; and the Way of Salvation (Heilsordnung). The last volume deals with The Church, The Means of Grace, The Christian Life, and The Last Things or Eschatology. This important work presents in a most orderly and exhaustive manner the conservative Arminian view of theology which characterized the thinking of Evangelical leaders almost exclusively throughout the first century of her existence. Bishop Esher who was a staunch defender of the doctrine of Christian perfection which had been taken over bodily from the *Discipline* of the Methodist Church,<sup>39</sup> gave this doctrine an appropriate place in his consideration of the stages of grace in salvation. The work of Bishop Esher was not translated into English.

At about the same time a splendid volume *Religion, A Rational Demand*, appeared from the Evangelical Press in Cleveland, in 1900. This work by the Rev. G. J. Kirn, M.A., Ph.D., then dean at Northwestern College, is an excellent philosophical interpretation of life and shows Dean Kirn's enthusiastic faith that the natural and logical conclusion to a thoughtful quest for understanding of man and the universe is a sincere faith in religion.<sup>40</sup>

Another of the more prominent leaders of the church who gave considerable time to writing was Bishop Thomas Bowman. Beyond his edition of the *Catechism*, which is still in use, and his analytical account of the separation in the church in 1891, Bishop Bowman also wrote a more original and creative work, *The Great Salvation*, which was printed in Cleveland in 1909. This book presents the experiential side of religion as understood by the Evangelical Association. Bowman stresses Christian perfection as an essential experience for the believer.<sup>41</sup>

In 1921, near the close of this period there came from the Evangelical Press in Cleveland, Ohio, a monumental theological textbook entitled: *Systematic Theology* written by Rev. S. J. Gamertsfelder, D.D., Ph.D.,

<sup>39</sup> Cf. The Methodist Discipline, 1808 (German), pp. 65-70, and The Evangelical Discipline, 1809 (German), pp. 37-42.

<sup>40</sup> Kirn, G. J., *Religion, A Rational Demand*, Cleveland, 1900, p. 228.

<sup>41</sup> Bowman, Thomas, *The Great Salvation*, Cleveland, 1909, p. 78f.

president emeritus and professor of Systematic Theology of Evangelical Theological Seminary, Naperville, Illinois. This work which was authorized for publication by the General Conference of 1919 was substantially the material which, over a course of many years, Dr. Gamertsfelder had presented to his classes of theological students. This volume is being used as textbook material in the Junior Ministers Course of Study and in theological seminaries. The material is arranged under six major headings. After an extended introductory statement of Definitions, Sources and Aims, Part One introduces Accepted Fundamental Truths in which the author presents his interpretation of Man, The Bible, Religious Consciousness and the Place of Reason and Revelation in Religion. Part Two treats of God; Part Three, of The Person and Work of Christ; Part Four, of The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit; Part Five of The Doctrine of Personal Salvation; and Part Six of The Last Things or Eschatology. Although less extensive than the work by Bishop Esher, the points of view expressed in general are very similar to those of this previous work. This author, too, holds to the Wesleyan or Disciplinary conception of Christian perfection. He uses a slightly different figure when he likens this attainment to the growth and development of a seed, and also allows for variety of experience in different individuals:

"Like all other stages of the Christian life entire sanctification, or perfect love, cannot be bounded as to details by the same lines for all believers. In regeneration the vigor of the spiritual life imparted to one may vary greatly from the vigor imparted to another, although persons may have been brought up in the same environment and under the same religious instruction. So also is the experience of perfect love; the higher Christian life of one person may differ widely from that of another as to details. Notwithstanding all this diversity, there is a unity in essential element that justifies a doctrinal statement of this stage of Christian experience. The essential element of entire sanctification is the removal of certain carnal remains that occasionally becloud the consciousness of being a child of God, or weaken the disposition of holy love implanted in regeneration."<sup>42</sup>

During these years the leaders came to see the wisdom of having the laws of the church codified. In the body of the minutes of the General Conference of 1895 some new legal rulings were published and in an extended appendix to that volume all the previously enacted church laws still in force were carefully set forth.<sup>43</sup>

Eight years later the general conference requested Bishop S. C. Breyfogel to compile a book on Evangelical Church Law.<sup>44</sup> Although he

<sup>42</sup> Gamertsfelder, S. J., *Systematic Theology*, Cleveland, 1921, p. 531f.

<sup>43</sup> *GCJ*, 1895, pp. 75 and 97.

<sup>44</sup> *GCJ*, 1903, p. 113.



worked on this compilation for thirty years, Bishop Breyfogel never felt that he had brought the work to sufficient completion for publication.

During these same years the church ordered the publication of a *Junior Catechism* for children of eight to twelve years<sup>45</sup> and constantly throughout the period reference is made, as in former years, to the necessity of using the *Catechism* and sound educational methods for the proper training of childhood and youth in the faith and order of the church so that they may be led into an intelligent faith and vital experience, and become faithful and useful members of the church. In one instance there is the specific instruction to ministers that the teaching of the *Catechism* is not to be entrusted to others, but because of the very important nature of this work, it is always to be done by the minister himself.<sup>46</sup>

The custom of publishing an annual *Year Book* was reestablished by the conference of 1903 which specified that a *Year Book* should be printed and ready for distribution by June 1, 1904.<sup>47</sup> Even more far-reaching in its importance was the printing of a new English *Hymnal* of the church.<sup>48</sup> A special committee, consisting of Bishops S. C. Breyfogel, S. P. Spreng, G. Heinmiller, L. H. Seager, and Thomas Bowman, and the ministers, W. H. Bucks, H. A. Kramer, E. M. Spreng, G. B. Kimmel and W. L. Naumann, was appointed for this purpose and after careful study and selection of hymns the book was brought from the press. The new hymnal of the denomination was not only well received among the membership of the church, but very favorably commented on by experts outside the denomination. Following the trend of the times toward more orderly, worshipful and even more liturgical services this committee prepared a fitting order of worship which was printed in the first pages of the new hymnal. This suggested service plan did much to bring dignity, balance, and uniformity to the services of worship in the church. In keeping with the same spirit the German Hymnal was also revised. While these two Hymnals were most widely used throughout the Evangelical Association, other hymn books were published by the Evangelical Press and some of them quite widely used as the number of editions listed in the bibliography indicates.

## 86. ON THE MINISTRY

Constantly through the years especially after the Civil War, the lay and clerical leaders of the church stressed the need for an adequately trained ministry. Numerous articles appeared in the church papers

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<sup>45</sup> *GCJ*, 1899, p. 99.

<sup>46</sup> *GCJ*, 1907, p. 134.

<sup>47</sup> *GCJ*, 1903, p. 141.

<sup>48</sup> *GCJ*, 1915, pp. 107 and 211.

calling for cultured men for the ministry of the church and also stating ideals and principles for preaching, visiting and even for the personal dress and conduct of the clergy. At the Evangelical Congress in Chicago in 1893, Prof. S. L. Umbach of the Union Biblical Institute at Naperville, Ill., delivered a strong address on the subject calling for a double preparation for the ministry,

"the one effected by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the heart in a rich and abundant measure, the other an acquired preparation by means of a thorough intellectual training through the aid of competent instruction."<sup>49</sup>

Two years later a special committee was named to prepare special reading courses for ministers as well as for laymen who desired to pursue such culture.<sup>50</sup> This was in reality the beginning of the Correspondence College which served the church, its ministry and also hundreds of studious young people, under the careful personal supervision of Bishop S. C. Breyfogel during the next generation. As early as 1880 a department of theology was established at Union Seminary in New Berlin, Pa. By 1905 a theological department had been established at Schuylkill Seminary in Reading which was the beginning of the present Evangelical School of Theology and which brought a cultural influence to the ministry of the eastern area of the church as the Union Biblical Institute at Naperville, Illinois, had done in the central and western areas.

With the coming of the second decade of the twentieth century, the church began to feel a great need for more ministers for the adequate leadership of the denomination. In 1915 the bishops stated in their episcopal message that the church needed fifty new ministers and in another quadrennium that need had risen to one hundred and sixty.<sup>51</sup>

Numerous reasons were offered for this apparent shortage of men for the ministry. Some leaders felt that a sufficiently strong challenge had not been given to young men to consider seriously the work of the ministry. This lack was remedied by establishing, as one of the major emphases of the Forward Movement, a strong challenge to the young people of the church to dedicate their lives to full-time Christian service. Another deterrent was the fact that with rising salaries in other callings to meet the rising cost of living, very little had been done to increase the salaries of the ministers of the church. As a gesture in that direction the General Conference of 1919 raised the salaries of the bishops more than fifty per cent that year from \$2,200 to \$3,600, and recommended to the annual conferences the following minimum salary schedule: Presiding Elders, \$1,600; Itinerant Elders, \$1,300; Itinerant

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<sup>49</sup> Knobel, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>50</sup> *GCF*, 1895, p. 61.

<sup>51</sup> *GCF*, 1915, p. 28, and 1919, p. 31.

Deacons, \$1,000; and Probationers, \$900; all of these exclusive of rent. At the same time the salaries of the general church officers were raised to \$2,600 and assistant editors were to receive \$2,200.<sup>52</sup>

Another problem which confronted the church during these years was the time limit. Men coming into the ranks of the ministry were uniformly better trained and were better prepared for carrying on and doing constructive work through longer terms of service in a given field of labor, and longer pastorates were being required in certain population centers to do permanent work. Frequently ministers had to be moved by an arbitrary man-made limit, when effective service called for their retention. Both ministry and laity felt that something should be done about the time limit. At the beginning of this period no minister was permitted to stay at the same appointment longer than three years. In 1895, by a vote of seventy-five to thirteen, this period was lengthened to four years.<sup>53</sup> Twelve years later the limit was extended to five years, and a presiding elder was also permitted to remain five years on the same district.<sup>54</sup> In 1915 the possible span of the ministry in a given church was lengthened again, this time to seven years.<sup>55</sup> Since the merging of the churches the practice of moving men less frequently has added much to the stability and constructive nature of the work of the denomination. Longer pastorates have come to be the general rule. In 1934 the time-limit of the ministers was removed altogether.

Another boon to the ministry of the Evangelical Church is the Superannuation Fund founded in 1911 after much painstaking effort, support, and direction by Bishop S. C. Breyfogel, who became the first general secretary of the Fund which position he maintained until his death. The first Board of Administration of the Superannuation Fund consisted of Bishops Thomas Bowman, S. C. Breyfogel, W. Horn, S. P. Spreng, Revs. G. Heinmiller, F. Klump, F. R. Plantikow, and L. W. Bock, and the laymen, William Grote, A. Quilling, Ezra Kimmel, M. Gabel, F. W. Ramsey, J. C. Breithaupt, and A. N. Martin. This Fund was constituted from many sources, from gifts from large-hearted individuals, annuities, bequests, the Forward Movement, invested funds, grants from the Board of Publication, and the regular annual payments of pastors and congregations. By virtue of the fact that the Fund is subsidized by gifts and regular payments from the congregations, the annual dues to ministers are considerably lower than the actual cost of the insurance which they receive. The plan originally was designed to assure all ministers, after retirement at seventy or previous disability, at least \$10 annually for every year in itinerant service in the denomina-

<sup>52</sup> *GCF*, 1919, p. 287.

<sup>53</sup> *GCF*, 1895, p. 33.

<sup>54</sup> *GCF*, 1907, p. 130.

<sup>55</sup> *GCF*, 1915, p. 199.



tion and sixty per cent of such an amount to a surviving widow or dependent children. For a time \$12 for every year of service was paid but, due to unforeseen shrinking in the Fund in recent years and also due to the increasing number of dependents on the Fund, that rate at present has been reduced to \$9 per year.

The General Conference of 1938 submitted to the church for study during the quadrennium, an enlargement of the plan in terms of a fully funded plan which, if adopted, will greatly increase the benefits of ministerial pension.

### 87. IMPORTANT LEGISLATION

A very important change was made in the form of government of the church soon after the division of the denomination, when laymen were admitted to representation in the annual and general conferences. Lay representation was a subject of much discussion during the years of division and had been a favorite point of support among a number of the leaders of the church, who later became the leaders of the United Evangelical Church. Many felt that lay representation would make for greater democracy in the denomination and, therefore, were willing to support it since at least some of the major difficulties in the preceding years had been attributed to the assumption and exercise of too much autocratic power.

The General Conference of 1895 prepared a plan whereby each annual conference having 4,500 members should have one lay delegate in the general conference, and a conference having 9,000 or more members should have two such lay delegates, but no conference should have more than two lay delegates in the general conference. In the case where any annual conference had less than 4,500 members it was to be grouped with another annual conference to obtain the required number of members to secure lay representation in the general conference.

In each case the names of candidates were presented to the annual conference by the quarterly conferences, nominations were then made by the annual conference only to be referred to the quarterly conferences again for final election. All candidates had to be thirty or more years of age and have held membership in the denomination at least seven years prior to election. This basis was referred to the annual conferences after 1895<sup>56</sup> and apparently did not receive sufficient support to make it law.

Four years later there was so much sentiment in favor of reconsideration of the question of lay representation and there were so many petitions to the general conference requesting that it be given consideration that this body decided to appoint a committee of five ministers and

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<sup>56</sup> *G CJ*, 1895, pp. 77f and 94.

four laymen to study the question thoroughly and report back in 1903.<sup>57</sup> This committee consisted of S. C. Breyfogel, S. P. Spreng, G. Heinmiller, W. Schmus, W. H. Bucks, and the laymen, L. J. Breithaupt, J. J. Meyer, W. Grote and I. Y. Moyer.

At the twenty-third session of the general conference held in Berlin, Ontario, in 1903, a new basis was proposed and adopted and finally became law when it was approved by a two-thirds majority of all the members at the annual conferences the following year. According to this plan there was to be one delegate from each annual conference which had less than 7,000 members, two delegates from those conferences having more than 7,000 and less than 15,000 members, and three delegates from conferences having more than 15,000 members. Election to such lay position was limited to persons over thirty years of age and who had been members of the denomination for at least ten years. Lay representatives were permitted to have all the rights of ministerial delegates save in those matters which referred to ministerial orders themselves.<sup>58</sup> The first lay delegates appeared accordingly at the next general conference held at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1907. In this year the basis of lay representation in the general conference was changed from one delegate for 7,000 members to one delegate for every 3,000 members or surplus of 2,000, provided that each conference should have at least one lay delegate. At the time of the merger of the churches, this basis was changed again to give each conference equal ministerial and lay representation in the general conference.<sup>59</sup>

Here, too, in 1907, the first provision was made for lay representation in the annual conferences, on the basis of four laymen from each presiding elder district with the provision that such laymen shall be at least twenty-eight years of age and shall have been members of the church at least five years.<sup>60</sup> At the time of the merging of the churches this basis of representation was changed to allow each field of labor to have a lay member in the annual conference.

A slight change in the name of the denomination was made upon the motion of Bishop Esher in 1895 when the words "of North America" were dropped in order to bring the name more nearly in keeping with the international membership and extent of the church. Through the following twelve years the old longer title appeared in a number of the official publications of the church and even in the German and English *Discipline*. Special action of the general conference at its session in 1903 and 1907 ordered that all materials should

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<sup>57</sup> *GCJ*, 1899, p. 109.

<sup>58</sup> *GCJ*, 1903, p. 115 (German ed.).

<sup>59</sup> *GCJ*, 1907, p. 136.

<sup>60</sup> *GCJ*, 1907, p. 135f.

be properly edited so that the name of the denomination shall henceforth appear as "The Evangelical Association."<sup>61</sup>

Following the custom of other denominations and in keeping with the increasing stress upon public health and sanitation, the General Conference of 1915 upon motion of C. D. Dreher instituted the practice of using individual communion cups for the administration of Holy Communion.<sup>62</sup>

With the growing needs of the denomination for funds for the expansion and administration of its work both at home and abroad there was also a demand for a better and more adequate financial system. The ever increasing number of demands for special offerings from the local churches and individuals was confusing and became a burden to the people and a very unsatisfactory method of support, because often an unbalanced support was given, based not on need, but on appeal. Some received too much and most got too little. In 1915 a budget system of financing all the major activities of the denomination was adopted which provided for the collection of larger sums of money from the local congregations and annual conferences and for the distribution of the same to the agencies of the church on an equitable basis.<sup>63</sup> This avoided the duplication of time and energy spent in collection and soon proved to be a great help in more efficiently administering the church. Instead of irregular incomes for the major agencies of the church, this method produced regular incomes by apportioning the needs in specific assignments to the various conferences and congregations of the denomination. In the large this plan has been followed since and most congregations put forth every effort to raise in full their apportionments for conference interests and general church causes.

These were years, too, in which the administration of the local congregation and the supervision of the membership came under the scrutiny of the general conference. Apparently there was little uniformity in the keeping of the official records of the congregations even though the publishing house made available proper record books for the purpose. The actual meaning of membership in the church was looked upon with varying degrees of strictness so that in some sections of the church the lists were regularly purged of those who were indifferent toward the church while in other areas a looser relationship existed between some of the members and their church. At the very beginning of this century the leaders of the denomination provided stricter rules for the supervision of members and also required more accuracy and care in revising the lists of members, annually, under the

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<sup>61</sup> *GCJ*, 1903, p. 117, and 1907, p. 134.

<sup>62</sup> *GCJ*, 1915, pp. 104 and 156.

<sup>63</sup> *GCJ*, 1915, pp. 64 and 259.



supervision of the pastor, class-leader and exhorter.<sup>64</sup> This had a very wholesome effect upon the entire church for in the next quarter of a century the membership of the denomination was to be increased by fifty per cent and at the same time church membership came to be much more significant with the more rigid requirements.

Increasing interest in the history and background of the denomination also helped materially in increasing the influence of the church. Fifty years after Jacob Albright had founded the denomination, a memorial church was erected near his grave at Kleinfeltersville, Pennsylvania, and after another fifty years proper memorial services were conducted. Bishop Thomas Bowman took particular interest in keeping this historic obligation before the church and himself collected a substantial sum of money for a suitable memorial marker for Albright's grave. Already in 1915 he reported having collected \$286.65 for this purpose and he was instructed by the general conference to continue this collection.<sup>65</sup>

The year 1916 marked the one hundredth anniversary of several important events in the development of the Evangelical Association so that on September 26th and 27th fitting services were conducted commemorating these events. The spirit of friendship between the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church had developed sufficiently and the anticipation of reuniting these bodies in the near future had become so real that both groups joined in these celebrations under the auspices of the Historical Society of the United Evangelical Church. Four such services were held: one at Dreisbach's commemorating the holding of the first general conference, a second at Lewisburg commemorating the establishing of the work of the denomination in New York and Canada by pioneers of the Lewisburg class, a third at Winfield where one hundred years before in the Eyer barn it had been determined to establish a printing business for the church and from which conference also the first missionaries were sent into Western Pennsylvania, and a fourth at New Berlin where the first church building and the first publishing house had been erected just one hundred years before. From these meetings a sense of common origin and a wholesome feeling of friendliness between these two denominations continued to grow so that both denominations profited considerably from this new appreciation of their common rich heritage. This consciousness of a heritage now more than a century old was increased also by the publication of the addresses and events connected with this celebration in the finest of all the publications of the Historical Society of the church, an octavo volume of 178 pages, under the editorship of the Revs. J. D. Shortess and A. D. Gramley.

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<sup>64</sup> *GCF*, 1903, p. 118 (German edition).

<sup>65</sup> *GCF*, 1915, pp. 125 and 259.

During the generation of separate existence after the division in the church, the Evangelical Association had a growth of about 50,000 members. The membership in 1895 was just above 110,000 and in 1919 just a few short of 160,000. The average net gain in these quadrenniums was about 7,500 members with the peak reached in 1915 when it was reported that there was a net gain of 13,684 in four years. The very next report in 1919, however, showed a gain of only 4,746 members. The rate of growth in church membership is fairly indicative of the development in other branches of the work except that the work of the young people grew even more rapidly as did also the number of catechetical classes and the number of catechumens enrolled. (See graphs and table in Appendix F.)

With the increasing mobility of the population there came to be increasing difficulty in keeping definite record of the members of the denomination who moved to the larger cities and into communities where there were no Evangelical churches. On the motion of Bishop S. C. Breyfogel in 1915 it was decided to create a commission to make a survey of all the annual conferences in order to ascertain in what growing centers of population and unoccupied rural communities the denomination was not yet represented.<sup>66</sup> This commission studied particularly those towns and cities into which the members of the church were moving and gave a great deal of time to the consideration of the whole problem of the rural church. Ministers were required to keep lists of non-resident members of their congregations which were taken by the commission and reported annually to the Board of Missions and the Board of Church Extension. Although dealing with this problem perennially since then the denomination has not yet discovered ways and means to prevent a disproportionately large loss of its membership through the moving of its members.

It was also during these years that the westward progress of the church was marked by the establishing of work in Montana and several of the previous missionary conferences were made self-supporting groups. The development of the conferences of the church may be seen in Appendix C where the time of organization of each conference is set forth in chronological order.

## 88. MISSION WORK AMONG THE ITALIANS AND SWEDES

In 1904 the Woman's Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association determined to begin a mission work among Italians in this country. Miss Katharine Eyerick was sent to Wellsville, Ohio, to begin this work. While this mission continued temporarily, Miss Eyerick discontinued her work here and was sent to Chicago, Ill., where after several years it was deemed advisable again to give up the project.

<sup>66</sup> *GCFJ*, 1915, p. 181f.

Not discouraged by these difficulties the Woman's Missionary Society with the approval of the Board of Missions determined to try once more and began a mission in a downtown section of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, thickly populated by Italians. The first church building which was erected here in 1911 has come to be the parent church in this interesting home mission work in eastern Wisconsin. It is known as the Guiliani Memorial Church in memory of the first superintendent and outstanding worker in this important movement.

Today this Italian mission is continued in three cities, Milwaukee, Racine and Kenosha. The Guiliani Church in Milwaukee has a membership of 161, Kenosha 105, and the two smaller congregations in Racine 85 persons on their membership rolls. The Rev. C. A. Bender is the superintendent of this mission. In recent years one of the district superintendents of the Wisconsin Conference is regularly chosen to supervise this work.

Although no permanent mission among the Swedes was ever established by the denomination it must be remembered that the Evangelical Association attempted such a work in 1895. In that year Andrew Hyden was licensed to preach by the East Pennsylvania Conference and appointed to the First Swedish Church, Boston, which was a mission of the New England District of that conference. While this mission was not continued permanently, a goodly number of persons of Swedish descent were won to the church and their descendants form a strong contingent in the congregations of the New England Conference today.

## 89. CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP

In the generation after 1891 the Evangelical Association lost three of its Bishops: Bishop J. J. Esher, who died April 16, 1901; former Bishop Reuben Yeakel, who died March 5, 1904; and Bishop William Horn, who died April 27, 1917.

Although the number of the bishops had been reduced to three at the death of Bishop Esher in 1901, no additional bishop was named in 1903, but in 1907 S. P. Spreng, former editor of *The Evangelical Messenger*, was named the fourth bishop. In 1915 Bishops Thomas Bowman and William Horn retired and became the first superannuated bishops of the denomination. To fill their places G. Heinmiller and L. H. Seager were elected to the episcopacy. The complete list of bishops of the denomination and their years in the episcopacy may be seen in Appendix B. Although the church lost numerous important leaders who deserve mention here, our study of this important period is brought to a close with three brief statements of the lives and work of Bishops Esher, Yeakel and Horn.



### Bishop J. J. Esher

John Jacob Esher was born December 11, 1823, the second son of Jacob and Maria Ursula (Schmidt) Esher in Baldenheim, near Schlettstadt in Germany. In the spring of 1832 the family came to America and settled near Warren, Pennsylvania. Five years later with other pioneers of this class, the Eshers moved to Illinois where they settled near Des Plaines. Here John Jacob Esher grew into the church. He gives his own account of his conversion on February 16, 1834, and on June 11, 1845, he became a minister of the Illinois Conference. Very early he proved his ability as a leader and from 1851 to 1899 sat as a member of the general conference in sixteen sessions, during the last ten of these sessions as bishop, for in 1863 at Buffalo, New York, he had been elevated to the episcopacy. Bishop Esher served as a bishop for thirty-seven years. He organized the first conferences in Europe and in Asia and was the first bishop to visit the missions in the Orient and to travel around the world. Of his literary works, analysis and appreciation have already been written. In the death of J. J. Esher the Evangelical Association lost a genius in mind and administration. In times of doctrinal dispute and administrative tenseness he had guided the Evangelical Association with characteristic German discipline and strict adherence to church law. Bishop Esher disliked nothing so much as slovenliness. "One of his chief characteristics," wrote William Horn, "was his thoroughness. He hated everything superficial."<sup>67</sup> Those who knew him best speak most of the energy and sincerity of purpose of this tireless leader of the Evangelical Association.

### Reuben Yeakel

Reuben Yeakel was born in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, near the present site of the Milford Camp Meeting grounds, on August 3, 1827, and died March 5, 1904. He was received into the East Pennsylvania Conference in the spring of 1853 and six years later became the corresponding secretary of the General Missionary Society, the first to be elected to that office. A quadrennium later the general conference elected him as the editor of the Sunday School literature in both languages, which position he held for eight years until in January, 1871, he assumed the duties of editing *The Evangelical Messenger* when T. G. Clewell withdrew.

At the general conference that same year he was elected a bishop of the church and remained one of the general overseers of the denomination for eight years. Owing to financial misfortunes which proved embarrassing to him Reuben Yeakel would not permit his name

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<sup>67</sup> Horn, W., *Leben und Wirken von Bischof Joh. Jakob Escher*, Cleveland, 1907, p. 287.

to be placed in candidacy for reelection in 1879, but thereafter gave full time to the presidency of Union Biblical Institute. From 1883 to 1887 he served as the assistant editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and after that spent most of his time preparing his history of the denomination and other literary works of merit. He founded and edited a theological quarterly *Vierteljahrschrift für Theologie und Kirche* and also a scientific and practical quarterly the *Vierteljahrschrift für Wissenschaftliche und Practische Theologie*. Although requested by the General Conference of 1895 to prepare a commentary on the Discipline of the church he was never able to finish this work.<sup>68</sup>

### William Horn

On May 1, 1839, exactly eighty years after the birth of the founder of the church, William Horn was born at Oberfischbach, near Siegen, in Westphalia in Germany. With his father, Jacob, he came to America in 1855 and the family settled near Lomira, Wisconsin. Horn was admitted to the Wisconsin Conference in 1861 and ten years later was elected a presiding elder. The year 1871 was an important year in his life for at this time he was also elected a delegate to the general conference and at the general session was named the editor of *Das Evangelische Magazin*. Eight years later he was promoted to the position of editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and at the time of the division in the church in 1891 was elected a bishop of the church. He sat in twelve sessions of the general conference and made six episcopal visits to Germany to supervise the work of the denomination there. By the General Conference of 1903 he was ordered to prepare the official biography of Bishop J. J. Esher which is still the authoritative work on Bishop Esher and is Bishop Horn's most valuable single literary work. The excellent literary style of Bishop Horn is not only to be observed in his regular work as an editor, but as well in the numerous contributions in poetry and prose which he contributed frequently. A number of his hymns appear in the Hymnals of the Evangelical Church. Many of the institutions of the church profited by his wise counselling and his service to the Orphan's Home at Flat Rock, Ohio, was especially distinguished. Bishop Horn died April 27, 1917.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> *EM*, March 9, 1904, p. 152.

<sup>69</sup> *EM*, May 9, 1917, p. 15, and *GCJ*, 1919, pp. 181, 318, 369.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH SINCE 1922

#### 90. THE BACKGROUND OF THE REUNION

An exceedingly rare phenomenon in Church History is the fact that a goodly number of leaders in the Evangelical Church who saw the denomination divide between 1887 and 1894 were among the leaders who brought the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church together once again a generation later in 1922. Scarcely had the records of the last law suits, occasioned by the division, been printed before some far-sighted and unbiased souls began to dream that this separation must eventually be corrected by a reunion.

The ecumenical feeling, which was evident in the coöperation of twenty-eight denominations in making the preparation for the organization of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America in 1905, had gripped both the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church. They both participated in this interdenominational movement and in sharing this ecumenical spirit laid the unseen foundation for their reunion.<sup>1</sup>

A further step toward the merging of the two branches of the Evangelical Church began in the hearts and minds of the young people of both denominations. In 1907 some young people of the Evangelical groups in Chicago attended a revival meeting being conducted by Gypsy Smith and concluded that if these people of different doctrines could get together how much greater should be the possibility of unity in two churches with similar backgrounds and disciplines. Joseph Baumeister, a leader of the young people of the United Evangelical Church, suggested to Walter J. Miller, a leader of the young people of the Evangelical Association, that there should be a closer relationship between their denominations. As a result of that meeting John J. Arnold was sent as an official representative of the Chicago Union of the Young People's Alliance to the annual meeting of the Chicago Union of the Keystone League of Christian Endeavor with instructions to invite them to a union meeting. Approximately one thousand young people from these two groups met in the auditorium of the Chicago Young Men's Christian Association on April 8, 1907, and sent a resolution in keeping with the spirit of their meeting to the next general conference of the Evangelical Association which met the following

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<sup>1</sup> *G CJ*, 1907, p. 118, and *G CJU*, 1910, pp. 6, 35, and 80.



October. It was this resolution which spurred this general conference to specific action.<sup>2</sup>

The general conference of the Evangelical Association of 1907 adopted resolutions and appointed a commission on Church Union and Federation with a specific view to opening negotiations with the United Evangelical Church. This conference resolved,

"That we note with pleasure the signs of growing fraternal regard between the ministers and members of our Church and that of the United Evangelical Church, and that we look with favor and approval upon such well directed efforts as will promote fraternal and harmonious coöperation, and that ultimate union by which the spiritual descendants of Jacob Albright will again be united in one fold."<sup>3</sup>

This first commission on Church Union and Federation consisted of Bishops S. C. Breyfogel and S. P. Spreng, and Revs. W. H. Bucks, G. Heinmiller, J. B. Kanaga, H. J. Kiekhoefer and S. J. Gamertsfelder.<sup>4</sup>

The general conference of the United Evangelical Church held in First Church, Canton, Ohio, on Friday, October 14, 1910, adopted resolutions and elected a commission on Church Federation and Church Union. This conference clearly stated its sentiment in the resolution,

"He who prayed: 'That they all might be one, even as I and the Father are One,' is evidently leading the sons of Albright to see things in a different light, and is bringing us closer together."<sup>5</sup>

This first commission on Church Federation and Church Union consisted of U. F. Swengel, chairman; H. B. Hartzler, secretary; and J. F. Dunlap, J. J. Carmany, L. M. Boyer, W. H. Fouke, William Jonas, M. T. Maze and C. C. Poling.<sup>6</sup>

The commissioners on Church Federation and Union of the United Evangelical Church and the commissioners of Church Union and Federation of the Evangelical Association met jointly in Chicago on February 1, 1911. The spirit of this memorable meeting is reflected in the following statement:

"The sessions of the Joint Commission were characterized by a genuine spirit of fraternal feeling and the questions at issue were discussed in a kindly and brotherly manner. After deliberating for several days, it was agreed to appoint a sub-commission to more fully discuss and if possible agree upon some basis of organic union and report to the Joint Commission."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Pamphlet, *To Members of the Young People's Alliance of the Evangelical Association and the Keystone League of Christian Endeavor of the United Evangelical Church*, Oak Park, Ill., 1907, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *GCJ*, 1907, p. 118.

<sup>4</sup> *GCJ*, 1907, p. 122.

<sup>5</sup> *GCJU*, 1910, p. 31f, and p. 91.

<sup>6</sup> *GCJ*, 1911, p. 42.

Thus, less than twenty years after the division in the church, there was begun that important series of conferences which a decade later resulted in the actual merging of these bodies into the Evangelical Church. Each succeeding quadrennium saw the spirit of mutual regard and warm friendly feeling between these groups grow markedly as is to be seen in the pertinent paragraphs of the respective episcopal addresses as well as in the committee reports and general conference actions.

While these negotiations were in progress the Historical Society of the United Evangelical Church planned for a Centennial Celebration to mark a proper observance of the building of the first church in the denomination in 1816. This celebration immediately attracted attention throughout both denominations and at the invitation of the leaders of the United Evangelical Church members of the Evangelical Association were added to form a joint committee to plan for the occasion. By the time of the celebration, September 26-27, 1916, the plan was so enlarged that it marked the centennial observance of (1) the holding of the first general conference, (2) the establishing of missions in New York and Canada, (3) the organization of the printing business and (4) the erection of the first church building.

The first session of the celebration was held in the Dreisbach Church in Buffalo Valley, Union County, Pennsylvania, on Tuesday afternoon, September 26, 1916, where the opening keynote address was delivered by Bishop U. F. Swengel of Harrisburg. Dr. A. E. Gobble, secretary of the faculty and professor of Latin in Albright College read a paper on "Evangelical Educational Interests" which was followed by an address by Bishop W. M. Stanford on "The Polity and Spirit of Our Evangelical Fathers as Set Forth from 1807 to 1820."

At the evening session held in the Lewisburg Church, the Rev. M. T. Maze presided and spoke briefly and Bishop W. H. Fouke of Naperville, Illinois, spoke on the subject "Our Yesterday." The Rev. A. A. Winter read a paper previously prepared by Dr. Ammon Stapleton on "An Introductory Historical Address."

On the following morning at the meeting in the Winfield Church, Bishop S. P. Spreng of Naperville, Illinois, presided and spoke briefly. Bishop W. F. Heil delivered an address on "Evangelical Church Polity" and a paper on "Evangelical Missionary Work" was read by the Rev. B. H. Niebel, secretary of the Missionary Society of the United Evangelical Church.

Bishop W. H. Fouke presided at the afternoon meeting held in the New Berlin Church. Bishop George Heinmiller spoke on "Evangelical Journalism" and the Rev. J. D. Shortess read a paper on "The Formative Elements of the Evangelical Corpus" which had been prepared by Dr. Ammon Stapleton.

At the brief vesper service in the Evangelical Cemetery, Bishop U. F. Swengel presided and memorial addresses were delivered by the Rev. T. C. Meckel, editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter* and the Rev. W. E. Detwiler of Danville, Pennsylvania. The closing session of this memorable centennial occasion was held in the New Berlin Church on Wednesday evening, September 27, 1916, where Bishop L. H. Seager presided and spoke briefly. Bishop S. C. Breyfogel of Reading, Pennsylvania, delivered the final address on the subject "Providential Movements and the Open Door."

Hundreds of persons from both denominations were inspired by the splendid programs and the feeling of harmony which pervaded the entire group. Persons who attended this celebration feel that this happy meeting of the leaders and members of both churches had no small part in building the good will and friendliness which ultimately led to the union of the churches.

At the evening session in Cedar Falls, Iowa, on October 7, 1919, the Evangelical Association officially adopted the carefully prepared basis of union and at that session also made provision for a special session of the general conference which was anticipated for the fall of 1922, the time of the next regular meeting of the General Conference of the United Evangelical Church.<sup>7</sup>

The basis for the merging of these bodies provided for the continuation of the polity and doctrine of both groups. The Articles of Faith of the Evangelical Association were retained, due to their priority and common acceptance before 1891, and the articles on the doctrines on Regeneration, the witness of the Spirit, and Entire Sanctification and Christian Perfection were included in a separate chapter; thus all property rights and legal titles of both churches were safely perpetuated. The United Evangelical Church made arrangements to contribute a sufficient amount to the Superannuation Fund to enable their clergy to share in the full benefits of this fund. Since there was little actual difference between these denominations, there were very few actual impediments to the arrangement of a harmonious agreement for this merger. Sentiment was a much harder factor to overcome than legal hindrances. Since the relation of a bishop to the church had previously caused so much difficulty a paragraph was included in the new *Discipline* so that if a bishop be under charges or under suspension he is thereby disqualified to preside at the sessions of an annual conference.<sup>8</sup>

It was also provided that assignment of fields of labor to the ministers shall be made not by the bishop alone but by the bishop and the district superintendents. It was further agreed that after a second term

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<sup>7</sup> *GCF*, 1919, pp. 106 and 283.

<sup>8</sup> *GCF*, 1919, p. 194f.



a bishop to be reëlected must have at least a two-thirds favorable vote. This last regulation was recalled by the general conference in 1934.

Although the majority of the members and delegates of the United Evangelical Church were enthusiastically anticipating the consummation of the merger by the time of their next quadrennial session in 1922, the actual accomplishment of the adoption of the basis was not so easy in this instance because of a vigorous opposition of a minority group. Through the leadership of this minority group somewhat more than one-fifth of the membership of the former United Evangelical Church withdrew to form the new Evangelical Congregational Church.

### 91. THE MEMORABLE YEAR 1922

Although undercurrents of dissension were not unknown to the leaders of both commissions planning for the formation of the larger Evangelical Church, all the indications pointed toward the year 1922 as the time for the actual union of the sons of Jacob Albright into the one Evangelical Church. On Thursday, October 5, 1922, at 2: 00 p. m., the delegates of the United Evangelical Church assembled in Salem Church, Barrington, Illinois, in the eighth session of their general conference. On that same day and at exactly that same hour, the delegates who had sat in the twenty-seventh session of the general conference of the Evangelical Association in Cedar Falls, Iowa, were called to order in a special session of their general conference in the Mack Avenue Church in Detroit, Michigan. The primary function of both bodies that year was to prepare the few remaining details for the final act of merging into one body which would then immediately take over the work of the united church and plan for its administration.

To both of these bodies the report of the joint commissions on Church Federation and Union were read and in each case it was adopted unanimously, although at Barrington fifteen delegates refused to vote. At the Barrington meeting, when the report was adopted at the session of the general conference of the United Evangelical Church, the East Pennsylvania Conference delegation offered a protest and was given the right to file it with the secretary.<sup>9</sup>

The next morning on Saturday, October 7, 1922, Dr. C. A. Mock presented the following resolution for approval of the Basis of Union:

"Resolved, That the Basis of Union providing for the merger of the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church into one body, to be known as the Evangelical Church, together with the Constitution and all other provisions for the Organic Union of the two bodies, as presented to and adopted by the annual conferences, be approved and confirmed."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *GCJ*, 1922, p. 18b.

<sup>10</sup> *GCJ*, 1922, p. 19b.

After a lengthy discussion, the Basis of Union was referred to a committee of twenty persons, ten laymen and ten ministers, a minister and a layman from each conference delegation, to consider the points of difference relating to the Basis of Union and to prepare a program of procedure for presentation of the Basis of Union to the general conference. This committee reported the following Monday morning and its report was discussed until well into the afternoon of this fourth day of the session when it was finally adopted by a vote of 77 to 0. Just preceding this ballot announcement was made concerning the vote on the Basis of Union by the respective annual conferences to which it had been submitted before the meeting of the general conference to make possible an actual merging of the churches immediately after the separate sessions of the general conferences. The vote by the annual conferences stood 614 for union and 58 against it.<sup>11</sup> Due to previous objections, the East Pennsylvania Conference delegates requested to be listed as not voting and also had another protest entered in the minutes.

Immediately following the vote to merge with the Evangelical Association late on Monday night, October 9, the general conference of the United Evangelical Church voted to adjourn to travel immediately to Detroit and continue their session in the Mack Avenue Church where the general conference of the Evangelical Association was in session. The problem regarding the attitude of the East Pennsylvania delegation still remained an enigma until the morning session on October 11th, when E. S. Woodring, for the entire East Pennsylvania delegation except Rev. A. J. Brunner, presented a statement setting forth the reasons why his delegation could not further participate in the deliberations of this conference,

"We, the delegates from the East Pennsylvania Conference of the United Evangelical Church, because of the action of this General Conference taken at its sessions at Barrington on the 9th of October, 1922, by which the Basis of Union was approved, cannot consider participation in the business of this conference until the requests which we made prior to our protest are granted.

"We are present to afford every possible opportunity to this conference to exhaust the remedial means in the Church for adjusting the differences of which we complain and this expresses our attitude for the remaining sessions of this Conference."<sup>12</sup>

Despite the protests from this group against merging, the Enabling Act was read to the conference by J. F. Dunlap, the secretary of the Commission on Church Union, and was adopted by a vote of 75 to 0 on the morning of Friday, October 13, 1922. A message was sent by a

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<sup>11</sup> *GCI*, 1922, p. 24b.

<sup>12</sup> *GCI*, 1922, p. 26b.

committee consisting of A. J. Brunner, W. B. Cox, L. R. Herbst, H. H. Thoren, C. C. Poling, J. Auracher, and D. C. Hauk to inform the General Conference of the Evangelical Association that this body was ready to merge. A similar message was returned by a committee from the Evangelical Association consisting of T. C. Meckel, J. E. Messerschmidt, W. F. Teel, J. C. Luckel, C. F. Erffmeyer, C. R. Rall and W. J. Zimmerman. Before the adjournment this body adopted a strong appeal which was sent to all the congregations of the United Evangelical Church,

"To the Ministers and Members of the Former United Evangelical Church:

"Dearly beloved Brethren:

"Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

"The Eighth General Conference of the United Evangelical Church took the final action consummating organic union with the Evangelical Association in Detroit, Michigan, at 9:00 a. m., October 14, 1922. Its members for the first time sat with those of the General Conference of the Evangelical Association in the organization of the First General Conference of the Evangelical Church. The procedure within our own church culminating in this merger has been regular, in accordance with the provisions of the Discipline of the United Evangelical Church and the inherent rights of one ecclesiastical body to merge with another of similar faith and mission.

"Thus has been fulfilled a prophecy. . . . This is also the consummation of a hope . . . the answer to prayer . . . the glorification of the Great Head of the Church. . . .

"Think deeply, whether, considering the way this great proposal has come to this consummation, it is not of God. If it has not his approval, then what in his church has ever come to pass that can be so described? And if this is *his* work you may not pass by the open door to a holy compact for individual and united affirmation and coöperation, lest haply you should be found fighting against God.

"We, therefore, your servants, members of the Eighth General Conference of the United Evangelical Church, appeal to you in the name of a divinely sanctioned undertaking, in the name of Christian unity, in the name of a greater evangelism, in the name of an enlarged missionary program, in the name of the undivided will of an overwhelming majority of our communion as expressed in the action of annual conferences and ratified by the General Conference; and our appeal is that you subscribe to this action of your duly constituted representatives, as the splendid history of our church shows has been the unflinching custom of congregations and of annual and General Conferences; and we appeal to you that you do naught either separately or collectively that will prevent a union which shall consist of all the individual and congregational units of each of the two churches."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *G.C.J.*, 1922, p. 70b.



Unfortunately the request of this body was not universally heeded. Leaders of the protesting minority were able to create a sufficiently strong sentiment against the merger especially in eastern and central Pennsylvania so that together with some congregations in Ohio and Illinois a new denomination of less than 20,000 members was formed and shortly thereafter assumed the name, The Evangelical Congregational Church.

## 92. THE CONSUMMATION OF THE MERGER

Words will never be able to describe the joy which filled the lives of the delegates of both general conferences when the delegates who had adjourned from Barrington, Illinois, arrived in Detroit in time to attend the regularly called session of the Detroit body on Tuesday evening, October 10th. By common consent the regular session was adjourned. The secretary of this body wrote,

"An impromptu program, led by Bishop S. C. Breyfogel as chairman, occupied the blessed hours of the evening. Never were Evangelical hearts more deeply moved and more joyously blended as when this host of sons and daughters of Jacob Albright united in singing the grand old hymn of testimony, 'I love thy kingdom, Lord.' " <sup>14</sup>

The lesson from the fourth chapter of Ephesians was read by the Rev. H. F. Schlegel and the Rev. B. H. Niebel, Missionary Secretary of the United Evangelical Church led in the prayer. The chief addresses on this memorable night were delivered by Bishop M. T. Maze, Dr. J. F. Dunlap, Dr. Daniel A. Poling <sup>15</sup> and Dr. A. E. Hangen, all delegates of the United Evangelical Church. This informal meeting was not an official session of either of the general conferences but for the beauty of its fellowship and the consequent good which resulted from it, it was second to none of the regular sessions. Late that night the meeting was dismissed by the venerable Bishop Thomas Bowman.

The regular sessions of both bodies were continued through the next three days with each group using different portions of the Mack Avenue Church, until in their respective opening sessions on Friday, October 13th, each group was able to conclude its work. On the eighth and last day of its sessions, the Evangelical Association adopted the report of the special committee of ten persons from each group. It was reported that in the respective annual conferences, 1404 votes had been cast in favor of the merger, and that there were no negatives. During that last evening session, Bishop G. Heinmiller, secretary of the joint commission on Church Union, read the enabling act which was subsequently

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<sup>14</sup> *GCJ*, 1922, p. 144.

<sup>15</sup> For the Poling genealogy cf. Poling, C. C., *Life of D. S. Poling*, Harrisburg, 1912, p. 95.

adopted by the general conference of the Evangelical Association and which was also to prove to be one of his last prominent activities for his church, for he died a few days later.

The following morning, Saturday, October 14, 1922, promptly at 9:00 A. M., Bishop S. C. Breyfogel opened the first general conference of the Evangelical Church, "In the Name of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost." After the chairman had read the Twenty-Fourth Psalm, the congregation sang the *Gloria Patri* and Bishop L. H. Seager led in the recitation of The Apostles' Creed. Bishop S. P. Spreng led in a prayer. Editor W. H. Fouke read the One Hundred and Twenty-Sixth Psalm and also Ephesians 2: 13-22 and 3: 14-21. After the prayer by Bishop M. T. Maze the conference sang the hymns "Onward and Upward" and "Faith of Our Fathers." The prayer which brought to a close the worship of the morning was offered by Bishop Thomas Bowman. And so in the act of worship as the church had begun almost a century and a quarter earlier, the spiritual sons of Jacob Albright were reunited into one body and spirit.

At the request of the Board of Bishops of both churches, Bishop S. C. Breyfogel presided during that first session and the Rev. A. J. Brunner was chosen as the secretary of the conference. It had been agreed that two bishops should be elected from the itinerant elders of the former United Evangelical Church and four from the elders of the Evangelical Association. On the morning of the third day, the episcopal election resulted in the naming of S. C. Breyfogel, L. H. Seager, G. Heinmiller and S. P. Spreng from the former Evangelical Association and M. T. Maze and J. F. Dunlap from the former United Evangelical Church. Thomas Bowman was continued as a superannuated bishop. Bishop Heinmiller was named to the post of bishop of the church in Europe but was never able to assume this responsibility because of his sudden death.

The weekly church papers, *The Evangelical* of the United Evangelical Church and *The Evangelical Messenger* of the Evangelical Association were merged according to the plan set forth in the basis of union and became *The Evangelical-Messenger*.

The Rev. C. Hauser was elected publisher of the Cleveland Publishing House, and J. J. Nungesser of the Publishing House at Harrisburg, from which office he later resigned. After the acceptance of Nungesser's resignation, Roy H. Stetler was elected as the publisher of the Harrisburg Publishing House. The other general offices were filled as follows: Editor of *The Evangelical-Messenger*, E. G. Frye; Associate Editor, A. E. Hangen; Editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*, T. C. Meckel; Editor of *The Evangelical Endeavorer*, W. C. Hallwachs; Editor of the English Sunday School Literature, W. E. Peffley; Associate Editor, G. L. Schaler; Editor of *Das Evangelische Magazin* and the

German Sunday School Literature, Christian Staebler; Executive Secretaries of the Missionary Society, G. E. Epp and B. H. Niebel; Field Secretary of the Missionary Society, B. R. Wiener; Executive Secretary of the Church Extension Society, H. F. Schlegel; General Secretary of the Evangelical Leagues of Christian Endeavor and Sunday Schools, E. W. Praetorius. J. W. Heininger was elected the secretary of the Forward Movement and C. H. Stauffacher was chosen secretary of the Forward Campaign in order to bring to a satisfactory completion these great programs for the advancement of the church, begun in each of the denominations before their union.

Many important items of business came up for consideration and adoption during this session of the first general conference of the reunited church. Numerous boundaries of annual conferences were changed and plans laid for later changes so that the work of the larger denomination might be facilitated. Although suggestions were made that a Men's Brotherhood be organized in the church at this time, this action was delayed and meanwhile such activity in the local church was assigned as a responsibility of the men's organized Sunday School classes. The various church societies were properly incorporated and the names of the societies brought into harmony with the new name of the church. Provision for all these legal acts was made by the adoption of a resolution carefully prepared by legal counsel. It was decided to keep two publishing houses, the one to be located in Harrisburg and the other to be moved from Cleveland to some city further west when the opportune time arrived. Proper provision for the new church *Discipline* with all the doctrines and items of polity carefully stated had been made in the basis of merger adopted by both groups and as such was unanimously adopted. The committee of twenty, ten from each former group, was continued to make proper provision for any future decisions of adjustment which might arise.

Of tremendous importance to the church because of its answers to many crucial problems and because of its later wide circulation was the report of the committee of twenty adopted first by each of the previous general conferences and then also by the merged conference. It stated,

"The General Conference of the Evangelical Church in session assembled in the city of Detroit, Michigan, from Saturday, October 14th to October 21, 1922, to the ministers and laity of the Evangelical Church—Greetings! To you our beloved brethren, 'who have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ.'

"In the name of a spiritual brotherhood, consisting of the united sons of Jacob Albright, we submit to your earnest consideration the following resolutions which were unanimously adopted by the two



separate General Conferences and by the General Conference of the Evangelical Church:

"(1) Resolved, That any odium or reflection resting upon individuals arising out of the events of our church division and incorporated in the proceedings of the conferences of both denominations shall be and hereby is lifted; and that such persons are restored to the affectionate regard of a reunited church.

"(2) That any congregation disposing of its church property for the purpose of location in another part of the same city or community and using the proceeds of the sale for such purpose of relocation shall not be required to change the title of the original property, and any congregation formerly in the United Evangelical Church shall continue to have the same rights as to its property as were conferred upon it by its existing property title.

"(3) Referring to the statement in the new Discipline covering the assignment of pastors to their fields of labor, the sufficient interpretation is the fact that the paragraph was changed from 'the presiding bishop *with the assistance* of the presiding elders shall assign to the preachers their respective fields of labor,' as it read in the Discipline of the Evangelical Association, to 'The presiding bishop *and* the presiding elders shall assign to the preachers their respective fields of labor,' as it reads in the Basis of Union.

"(4) Resolved, That we recognize two existing schools, Albright College and Schuylkill Seminary as the colleges of the Eastern portion of the church, and that if it be found feasible to merge the two schools at Reading, Pennsylvania, the college resulting from the merger shall be named Albright; The Theological School now maintained in connection with Schuylkill Seminary shall bear the name of Lewis D. Krause.

"(5) Resolved, That it is the judgment of this conference that the points raised with reference to the constitutional provisions limiting the powers of the General Conference are adequately covered by the items of the Discipline of the Evangelical Church and that these provisions clearly define and limit the powers of General Conference and that they were already unanimously ratified and adopted by the General Conference of the United Evangelical Church in 1918 and by the General Conference of the Evangelical Association in 1919.

"(6) It is agreed:

"That all obligations, legal or moral, entered into by the respective General Conferences of either the Evangelical Association or the United Evangelical Church, or by any one of the several boards or institutions of the respective General Conferences prior to organic union, and that all projects authorized or sanctioned by either of the two General Conferences, the two boards or institutions, prior to organic union, be honored by the General Conference authorities, boards, institutions, agencies, or otherwise of the reunited church.

"What our eyes have seen, what our hands have handled; what we have felt in our hearts, both when the final act merging the two denominations was taken and since, compels any question as to the validity and

the divineness of this step to go deep within the shadows. Fear, distrust, suspicion, were driven in disorganization from the field by the advancing hosts of the purposes of God under the banner of the cross and under the leadership of the Man of Calvary. Every man will go from this feast of brotherhood proclaiming that the Evangelical Church has come out of the workshop of the Eternal Will to be perfected indeed by those God employs as his co-laborers.

"To the task of making this union complete in numbers and highly effective as an instrument of salvation among men, every member of both former communions is called; and this not by any imperative of ours but by the word of the Head of the Church who prayed that they might be one, and who said, 'I must work the works of him that sent me.' We are members of one another—let us all belong to this body so that each doing severally his appointed task, all of us joined together by that which every part supplieth, may together fulfil our common mission.

"We are representatives from the United States and Canada; from Germany and Switzerland; from France, Poland and Latvia; from Japan and China; general superintendents and general church officers, ministers and laymen, are we. In us flows the blood of many races; but we are all the sons of God born out of the travail of Jesus Christ and of that of the founders of our church. Brothers are we, through our common faith in Christ—yea, we are *your* brothers, and unitedly we appeal to you to serve in the ranks of this beloved and influential company of believers and workers with God.

"We have the interdenominational consciousness and outlook, but 'East, West, home's best'—and while we love the whole Church of God, we love our own household of faith the best—the household of those who trace their origin as a church to the godly tilemaker of eastern Pennsylvania.

"To you we pledge our prayers that upon each individual and every society among us may come in a measure never known before, the spirit of the fathers, and the grace of our only Sovereign, the Lord Jesus Christ.

"With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit, even as we are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." <sup>16</sup>

Here is the final appeal from the leaders of the reunited church to all the ministers and laity of both former groups to join gladly and unanimously the greater Evangelical Church. By this happy union the new church now displayed a strength never felt by either body. The membership of the body was 259,417 and there were 419,245 enrolled in the Sunday Schools. The ministers of the denomination numbered 1,856

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<sup>16</sup> GCJ, 1922, pp. 87a, ff.

with an additional 575 in a local or part-time relationship. Enthusiasm ran high among those who had labored in these years to accomplish the reuniting of these bodies as well as among the laity throughout all portions of the new church who had caught the vision of the larger responsibilities of the enlarged church united in numbers and in spirit.

### 93. TRENDS IN RECENT YEARS

Since 1922 it has not been necessary to make many changes in polity and practice. The leaders of both churches had planned very wisely in laying the basis of union including the constitutional law and temporal economy for the guidance of the new church. What changes have occurred since then have been in keeping with the trends in world Christianity. Invitations to join the World Council of Churches were first issued to the American churches while the general conference was in session in Johnstown in October 1938, and so, by unanimous vote of that body, the Evangelical Church became the very first denomination to approve and officially join the World Council of Churches.

This widely prevalent ecumenical spirit is largely a culmination of a series of friendly relations with other denominations, specifically with the Methodist and the United Brethren Churches which dates back almost to the very beginning of the denomination. Rarely throughout these almost a hundred and fifty years has a session of the general conference gone by without one or more fraternal delegates bringing official greetings from other churches. In many cases the greetings have taken the form of overtures toward organic union. From the beginning of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America in 1905, the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church have been members and since 1922 the merged church has not only continued this relationship but her bishops and general officers have been taking a very active part in the administration of the Federal Council.

As early as 1907 the Rev. A. J. Nast brought the felicitations of the Methodist Church to the general conference of the Evangelical Association with a strong suggestion for federation and closer coöperation in the work of these denominations. Nast was the son of the Rev. William Nast, one of the very first important leaders of the Methodist work among the German speaking people and the official fraternal delegate from the Methodist Church to Evangelical gatherings for more than half a century. In 1911 these friendly relations actually took the form of a specific proposition for merging with the Methodists. The Rev. John Krantz of New York City was the Methodist delegate that year and spoke to the Evangelical delegates assembled in the East 75th Street Church in Cleveland on the morning of October 17th, saying:

"Brethren, I not only speak for myself, but I know that I represent the sincere wish of our great constituency, that we might be united into



one solidified and unified Evangelical Methodism. Several times you have voted formally in this respect, and our Dr. Nast of German Methodist fame, several times reported your willingness to consider this question. We shall be happy to entertain a proposition to come over to you as heartily as we have in the past extended invitations for your transfer to our camp of Israel." <sup>17</sup>

Again in 1915 and in 1919 official delegates of the Methodist Church spoke in similar vein to the Evangelical general conferences, but no definite movement toward an actual merging was ever accomplished, probably because the Evangelical feared a complete loss of identity in any such union. Certainly the obstacles in faith and polity were not insurmountable. Since the merger of 1922 forming the Evangelical Church, the relations with the Methodist Church have been less intimate very largely because it was sensed that no second merger would be attempted so soon after the one in 1922 and also because the Methodists were laying their plans which on May 10, 1939, in Kansas City, Missouri, culminated in the reunion of three major methodist bodies in the United States to form the Methodist Church.

Then, too, the relationship between the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Church has become so much closer that it is universally anticipated that this union of these two bodies of similar size and background will be effected before any other uniting is considered. During the first century of the history of both these denominations their relationships were constantly most intimate and friendly. About the close of the first quarter of this century, Dr. George W. Richards, then president of the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church in the United States at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, conceived the idea of his denomination's merging with the Evangelical Synod of North America, The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, and the Evangelical Church. Although there was marked difference in polity in that the first two were organized according to the presbyterial system and the last two had an episcopal form of government, Doctor Richards felt that the common German background of all these groups would prove a sufficient basis for a happy union. While this plan was never officially presented to the Evangelical Church and never matured as originally planned, on June 26, 1934, the Evangelical Synod of North America and the Reformed Church in the United States united to form the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

Particularly since that time the relations between the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Church have rapidly become more intimate and through the last two quadrenniums commissions from both bodies have been meeting regularly seeking a common basis for the consummation of a union just as soon as it is reasonably possible.

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<sup>17</sup> *GCFJ*, 1911, p. 121.

The General Conference of 1922 authorized a Central Conference of Europe to serve as the coördinating agency for all the Evangelical work in Europe. Although it was the intention of this conference that there should also be a resident bishop in Europe in charge of all the work of the denomination there, it was only a short time after that body closed its session that Bishop Heinmiller, who had just been assigned to this position, died and consequently this plan was delayed. However, in 1926 Dr. S. J. Umbreit, formerly superintendent of the mission work in Japan, was designated as the Bishop of the European area and served the church there during the next eight years. Because of the changing conditions at home and abroad, this European episcopate was discontinued in 1934 at which time former Bishop Umbreit was elected as the editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*, succeeding the Rev. T. C. Meckel who retired that year. The General Conference of 1938 gave the conferences of Germany the privilege of organizing a Reich's Conference to plan for the work in all the conferences of Germany. They were also given the power to select a bishop from among their number if deemed wise. The first Reich's Conference met in Christus Kirche, Berlin, April 12-16, 1939.

In 1926 the number of bishops in the American church was increased to six. Bishops S. C. Breyfogel, S. P. Spreng, L. H. Seager, M. T. Maze and J. F. Dunlap were reelected and the Rev. J. S. Stamm, professor of Systematic Theology in the Evangelical Theological Seminary at Naperville, Illinois, was newly elected. Dr. S. J. Umbreit was newly elected as Bishop for the European area. Because of age Bishops S. C. Breyfogel and S. P. Spreng, having requested the conference to grant them retirement from active service, were voted superannuated relationship and were elected Bishops Emeritus in 1930. Dr. G. E. Epp was the newly chosen bishop this year. In 1934 the number of bishops was reduced to four. Bishop J. S. Stamm and G. E. Epp were reelected and Dr. E. W. Praetorius and Dr. C. H. Stauffacher were newly elected. Bishops L. H. Seager and M. T. Maze were granted superannuated relationship and were elected Bishops Emeritus.

In 1930 for the first time the episcopal area system was adopted, although it had previously been much discussed. For the following quadrennium the church was divided into seven episcopal areas. Finding the area system of great advantage in giving much closer personal supervision to the respective areas and boards of the church, the general conference has continued this system. From 1934 to 1942 the American church has been divided into the Eastern Area supervised by the senior Bishop John S. Stamm, residing in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; the Central Area in charge of Bishop George E. Epp, residing in Naperville, Illinois; the Northwestern Area under the care of Bishop Elmer W. Praetorius, residing in St. Paul, Minnesota; and the Southwestern

Area under the supervision of Bishop Charles H. Stauffacher, residing in Kansas City, Missouri. The supervision of the missions and the conferences beyond North America is assigned annually by the Board of Bishops to its members. These elections made other changes in the general officers of the church necessary through these years. In 1930 Dr. W. L. Bollman was chosen successor to Bishop Epp as missionary secretary. Dr. J. Arthur Heck, formerly professor of Systematic Theology in the Evangelical School of Theology in Reading, Pennsylvania, was elected general secretary of Christian Education to succeed Bishop Praetorius in 1934. At the same session, Rev. Carl Heinmiller was elected as the field secretary of the Missionary Society, succeeding Bishop Stauffacher. Dr. C. A. Mock, associate editor of *The Evangelical-Messenger* from 1930-34, was elected to succeed Doctor Heck in the School of Theology by the trustees of that institution when the office of associate editor was discontinued in 1934.

In order to facilitate the gathering of funds for the general agencies of the denomination and also to make equitable and regular distribution of receipts to these institutions, the General Conference established the Commission on Finance in 1915 and adopted a formal constitution for this board in 1934.<sup>18</sup> This Commission annually determined the amounts to be appropriated to the various church agencies from this fund and apportioned specific sums to be raised by each conference in order to meet these appropriations. Its treasurer paid the income from the conferences to the respective institutions on its beneficiary list on a pro-rata basis as the funds were received. In order to integrate the work of the denomination still more thoroughly, the functions of this commission were absorbed by the larger Administrative Council established in 1938 which is to guide not only the receipt and expenditure of funds throughout the denomination but also to integrate and promote the denomination-wide program in such a fashion as will be to the greatest advantage of the entire church. This council has power to act for the denomination in an emergency in the interim of the sessions of General Conference. The Board of Bishops determines what constitutes an emergency. Similar councils have been set up for the annual conferences and in some cases for the local congregations.

Another important item of legislation in this period was the removal of the time limit for a pastor on a given charge. Throughout the years this limit had gradually been increased until at the time of the merger it was set at seven years. At the General Conference of 1934 in Akron, Ohio, that body voted 208 to 12 to remove this limit entirely. This law became effective in October in 1935. It still permits annual changes of appointments among the pastors at the annual conference

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<sup>18</sup> *GCI*, 1934, p. 123.



sessions or in the interim in emergencies, but it does not make such changes mandatory at the end of a given period. The limit of eight years which had been set for the assignment of a district superintendent (called presiding elders until 1930) on a given district was entirely removed in 1938.

In order to facilitate the keeping of proper records in the local congregations and in order to set forth an accurate picture of the relationships of the members to the denomination, it was proposed to the General Conference of 1934 that a new rubric "inactive members" be introduced in the blanks for reporting membership. This body emphatically refused this suggestion and clearly reiterated the mind of the denomination that there is but one class of membership in the Evangelical Church.<sup>19</sup>

A problem of serious import faced the church when the question arose regarding the continuation of both the publishing house of the Evangelical Association in Cleveland, Ohio, and the plant of the United Evangelical Church in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Earlier legislation had suggested the removal of the Cleveland House to some mid-western city when and if feasible. By 1934 the continuance of two houses in a denomination of this size was deemed unwise and the general conference voted to discontinue the publishing interests in Cleveland and to sell that house as soon as possible. The offices of the Missionary Society, The General Board of Christian Education, and the Superannuation Fund have been continued in Cleveland, but the printing and publishing interests have been entirely united and moved to the Evangelical Press at Third and Reily Streets, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

With the discontinuance of the Boards of the Forward Movement and the Forward Campaign, instituted in the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church respectively in the last quadrenniums before the merging of these bodies to stimulate the work of these denominations in all their branches, final reports were made to the General Conferences of 1926 and 1930 showing that about three-quarters of the financial goals in each case had been reached by the respective groups. The Evangelical Association actually paid \$2,002,854.05 to its beneficiaries and the United Evangelical Church distributed \$611,133.90. In each case the largest sums were given to the Missionary Society and the educational institutions of the denominations.<sup>20</sup>

At the time of the merger in 1922 the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the United Evangelical Church had a chartered Historical Society which by action of the General Conference of 1922 became the General Historical Society of the Evangelical Church. Branch Historical Societies have been established in several conferences since then.

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<sup>19</sup> *GCJ*, 1934, p. 181.

<sup>20</sup> *GCJ*, 1926, p. 192f, and 1930, p. 354f.

The official depository of the society is in the building of the School of Theology at Reading, Pennsylvania, where are housed a large collection of association items relating to the backgrounds of the denomination and the finest and most complete collection of imprints from the Evangelical Press from 1817 to the present, including the files of the official journals of the denomination from the beginning. The trustees of the society are elected quadrennially by the General Conference.

In 1934 the general conference recommended that the Historical Society become the custodian of the Albright Memorial Church in Kleinfeltersville, Pennsylvania, which action was legally accomplished by the East Pennsylvania Conference of 1939. Provision has also been made for the acquiring of property and materials of historic interest throughout the entire area of the denomination.

During the first and second quadrenniums of the merged church after 1922 the Rev. Dr. H. F. Schlegel was the executive secretary of the Board of Church Extension in which office he was succeeded in 1930 by the Rev. W. B. Cox. In 1934 the general conference combined the duties of this office with those of the field secretary of the Missionary Society. This position has been occupied by Dr. Carl Heinmiller during the last eight years.

The increase in interest in the history and background of the denomination is further shown in that Bishop S. C. Breyfogel was requested to revise and publish his *Digest of Evangelical Law* and also to write a history of the denomination, both of which tasks he was forced to leave undone at the time of his death.<sup>21</sup>

#### 94. SOCIAL TRENDS IN THE CHURCH

The denomination moved forward with new impetus after 1922 in making much more adequate preparation for a proper leadership in the church and in making commitments on major social issues. The optimism in the General Conference of 1922 seeped through the entire church to the local units. From the catechetical classes and the Sunday Schools to the theological seminaries a new enthusiasm led the authorities of the church to plan for a wider and better foundation for the future work of the church. The merging general conference took specific action to strive to produce finer educational materials for catechetical and Sunday School use.<sup>22</sup>

During the decade following the merging of the churches the Evangelical Press issued *The Junior Catechism for Children*, written by Rev. Christian Staebler, *The Handbook of Religion for Youth*, prepared by Dr. E. W. Praetorius, *What Evangelicals Believe*, by Bishop S. P.

<sup>21</sup> *GCJ*, 1922, p. 67a; 1926, pp. 31 and 100; 1930, p. 136.

<sup>22</sup> *GCJ*, 1922, p. 75a.

Spreng, and a guide for preparation for membership in the church entitled *Seeking Admission* written by Dr. W. E. Peffley. The *Junior Catechism* is designed to provide the first fundamental truths of religion for children under twelve. The *Handbook of Religion* supplements this material with a much more widely selected curriculum and *Seeking Admission* is designed to acquaint prospective members of the church with the life and faith of the denomination. Bishop Spreng's last book forms excellent supplementary reading for the maturer students.

A serious attempt was made to form a denomination-wide organization for the men of the church in 1922, but the action was postponed for the time and it was urged that organized Sunday School Classes should function in this capacity. By 1934, however, the Albright Brotherhood came to be recognized by the general conference as the organization for the men of the church and in each conference and in many local churches such brotherhoods were organized at once.

Under the leadership of Dr. E. W. Praetorius, then general secretary of the Sunday Schools and Evangelical Leagues of Christian Endeavor, a new constitution was prepared for and adopted by the General Conference of 1926 whereby all the religious educational work of the local church was brought under the supervision of the general conference and the local boards of Christian Education.<sup>23</sup> Eight years later the functions of the Board of Education, largely an advisory board fostering the general interests of the colleges and seminaries, were merged with those of the General Board of Christian Education.<sup>24</sup>

General Conventions of Christian Education were held beginning in Reading, Pa., in 1923 and as follows:

#### MEMBERSHIP

General Conventions	Year	Total Sunday School	E. L. C. E.		Inter- mediate	Senior
			Young People	Junior		
Reading, Pa. ....	1923	*373,382	41,947	11,832	2,281	....
Paynesville, Minn.	1926	*376,718	38,987	10,718	5,664	....
Naperville, Ill. ..	1930	313,645	31,925	9,970	5,664	....
Cedar Falls, Iowa .	1934	318,142	26,291	9,128	4,253	4,920
Wawasee, Ind. ...	1936	305,589	26,371	7,581	3,916	3,832
Paynesville, Minn.	1940	292,567	23,262	6,263	3,203	4,198

\* Includes foreign statistics.

In 1922 the Evangelical League of Christian Endeavor was organized as the successor of the Young People's Alliance and the Keystone League of Christian Endeavor to serve the Young People's Society needs. There came to be a widely prevalent feeling among the educational leaders of the denomination that there should be some closer correlation of all the educational activities of the young people of the church.

<sup>23</sup> *G.C.J.*, 1926, p. 109.

<sup>24</sup> *G.C.J.*, 1934, p. 157.



Consequently in 1930 The Young People's Union was formed with the specific purpose to closely integrate all youth activities in the general church as well as in the conferences. This organization has removed duplicate efforts and proved very effective.

The more recent decades have seen the Evangelical Church make very rapid strides in the selection and training of its men for the ministry. As late as 1919 the bishops of the Evangelical Association reported that this branch of the church needed 500 new ministers in the next four years. In the very first year of the following quadrennium, 122 young men responded for this high calling through the challenge issued by the Forward Movement. This challenge for more men for the ministry has continued even to the present. Higher educational demands have been constantly made upon those seeking admission to the ministry of the church. The standard set by the general conference now requires that men seeking license to preach shall have at least two years of college training and that before they are appointed to preach they shall be graduates of recognized colleges and that they shall have pursued a theological training if possible in one of the seminaries of the denomination. Graduates of the Evangelical seminaries are exempt from all conference examinations, save the doctrinal tests and the writing of the prescribed sermons which would otherwise be required for their promotion through the four annual classes leading toward the final ordination as an elder. In most instances now the men who are being trained for the ministry of the Evangelical Church have both college and seminary degrees.

To meet the increasing number of theological students and the ever rising educational standards, the Evangelical Church has increased the number of teachers in her seminaries and provided additional endowment so that young men being trained in the theological schools of the church shall have every advantage granted in similar institutions of other denominations. Both of the American theological seminaries of the Evangelical Church have been fully accredited by the American Association of Theological Seminaries.

For some years after 1922 the salaries of the ministers of the church were not at all commensurate with the demands made upon the clergy for training and for maintenance in their parishes, but they were somewhat improved in the succeeding quadrennium. While monetary rewards were never held out as a challenge to the young men anticipating life service in the church it was a matter fairly and honestly considered and by 1926 it was reported that during the preceding quadrennium there had been an increase of fourteen per cent in ministerial support.<sup>25</sup>

The last decade has likewise seen some remarkable changes in social trends and attitudes in the Evangelical Church. Whereas in former

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<sup>25</sup> *GCJ*, 1926, p. 58.

years local pastors had no guidance in this matter and only on annual or quadrennial occasions were official expressions given through the more or less appreciated committees on Morals, Sabbath and Temperance, the General Conference of 1934 made provision for a Board of Christian Social Action and named the bishop of the Eastern area to serve for the first quadrennium together with the editors, the secretaries, and one minister and one layman to be chosen by these. The same persons were continued on this committee by the General Conference of 1938. Since then the committees of both the general and annual conferences dealing with all such matters have been designated as the Committee on Social Action in these bodies. That this change of name is not the only change in this important matter is clearly indicated in the high type of evaluation of social issues. These statements do not savor of radicalism but, true to the tradition of the denomination, the leaders of the denomination have directed the church in their social thinking to a renewed pietistic emphasis of unimpeachable personal conduct and fairness, honesty and justice for all groups and races in society. In recent years particularly, every official local or general gathering of the denomination which has issued social pronouncements has reemphasized the official position of the church maintained since 1817 against war and bloodshed and has also insisted upon integrity and fairness in industry and in government in local and international relationships.

In keeping with the emphasis upon Christian charity the denomination has maintained homes for the aged and orphans and has also provided hospitals served by members of the Deaconess Society for more than a quarter of a century. Although steps were taken to discontinue the Deaconess Society in 1938 because of the few who volunteered for such service and because of the rising costs involved, nevertheless the homes for aged and orphans have continued uninterrupted. The Evangelical Church at present maintains the following institutions: Ebenezer Orphan Home in Flat Rock, Ohio; Evangelical Home for the Aged in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Evangelical Old People's Home and Orphanage in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania; Haven Hubbard Memorial Old People's Home at New Carlisle, Indiana; Pacific Evangelical Home for Aged People, Burbank, California; and Western Old People's Home in Cedar Falls, Iowa. In Europe the denomination maintains Homes for the Aged in Honau in South Germany, and in Interlaken, Switzerland.

Much emphasis has been laid in recent years upon proper training for young people in the important matter of home-making. More specific words are found nowhere than

"We strongly recommend that our ministers warn their young people against hasty and ill-considered marriages, and that officiating clergy-

men impress those whom they unite in holy wedlock with the sacredness of their vows, and the necessity of keeping them inviolate." <sup>26</sup>

"The remedy is to be found primarily in the exultation of vital religion, the reënthronement of the Bible to its rightful place of supremacy and the introduction of other attractive and wholesome literature in the home. Then also Protestantism needs to emphasize anew the sacredness of this divine institution. Young people should constantly be taught, in the home and in the church, to regard this as the most sacred of all human relations and to hold inviolate its solemn vows." <sup>27</sup>

With similar plainly spoken words the denominational spokesmen have favored uniform marriage and divorce laws throughout all the states and have pleaded with the members of their communion for a strict and careful observance of all the rules for the members of the church.

In similar vein the Evangelical Church has set high standards for their members in recreation and amusements. While the population trends of the twentieth century toward urban centers have changed the proportion of rural membership in the denomination considerably, the high standards for Christian conduct have remained unchanged. Forms of play and recreation have changed but always the highest standard of conduct has been demanded of old and young in their recreation.

"All amusements that lower our spiritual vitality, that weaken our powers of resistance to evil, that interrupt our fellowship with God, that endanger our physical well-being and that in any way militate against our highest efficiency should be avoided. . . . On the whole it is better for us to be too strict in avoiding even the appearance of evil than to indulge even moderately in the doubtful and questionable amusements of the world." <sup>28</sup>

That their membership might have the best possible help and guidance in seeking to maintain these high standards of conduct, the ministers and other leaders of the church have taught proper appreciation of the church buildings, services of worship, preaching and singing so that all these might lead to a finer and more helpful experience of worship. The period after the merger of the church is marked by the greatest expansion in new buildings in the history of the denomination. By 1926 the bishops reported that in four years 145 churches had been erected in towns and cities at a cost of \$5,440,150 and 49 more had been erected in towns and rural areas at a cost of \$463,192. In addition to this the expenditures for remodeling 209 other churches amounted to

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<sup>26</sup> *GCJ*, 1922, p. 27.

<sup>27</sup> *GCJ*, 1926, p. 55.

<sup>28</sup> *GCJ*, 1922, p. 80a.



\$950,391, making a total of almost \$7,000,000 for new buildings and alterations.<sup>29</sup>

The first building dedicated after the merging of the churches was the Zion Church, Chippewa Falls, New York, on November 19, 1922. The first congregation established after the merging of the churches was the Saint Matthew's congregation in Baltimore where the first service was conducted on October 29, 1922, and by the following January 28, 1923, their small chapel was dedicated.

All through these years, too, a much more careful supervision has been given to church architecture. Years earlier, Bishop John Seybert once sketched a suggested church plan in a letter to a pastor suggesting that the type of the simple meeting house should be followed. The foresight of the General Conference of 1922 was remarkable in that on the eve of this large building program they named a Bureau of Church Architecture which has been continued since with powers to guide and to make suggestions in the plans for new buildings or major alterations. This bureau, consisting originally of seven and now of five members, issued pamphlets setting forth the purpose of this agency and the ways in which it may be helpful to local groups.

Of equally great concern to those guiding the Evangelical Church in this period of development was the proper conduct of services of worship, with the free participation of the individual in the service and with proper preaching by all the ministers. One writer expressed this whole attitude,

"Our people come to the House of God in order to find something that will help them on the pilgrimage of life. . . . They want to hear something different from what they read in daily newspapers and magazines; they want to hear the Gospel and especially the message as delivered to the shepherds on Bethlehem's plains, 'Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, goodwill toward men.'

"The danger of the pulpit in this time is the modern tendency to preach science, philosophy, and politics. . . . Many pulpits in this age are spending more time in the discussion of the temporal affairs of this world than of the spiritual affairs of the Kingdom of God. So many a minister is confusing his office with that of the editor of the daily newspaper. . . . but the ambassador of eternal life delivers a message to this world from the world to come."<sup>30</sup>

From the beginning the Evangelical members have learned to sing but usually in the earlier days their singing was unaccompanied by any musical instrument. In fact one of the first books from the Evangelical Press in 1817 was a hymnal called *Das Geistliche Saitenspiel*. Bishop Long, another leader who sensed keenly and beautifully the proprieties

<sup>29</sup> *GCI*, 1926, p. 70f.

<sup>30</sup> *EM*, August 21, 1918.

of meaningful worship, urged the people of his day to sing joyfully and to participate freely in the services. A different interpretation is given by Bishop Bowman regarding the singing in the Sunday Schools of his rural home in northeastern Pennsylvania about 1846. He writes:

"We could sing but three hymns, 'When I can read my title clear,' 'Jesus, my All, to heaven is gone,' and 'A Charge to keep I have.' . . . If someone had put an organ into the church and played it, I think we would have been frightened. . . ." <sup>81</sup>

With a keener sense of the need of the individual worshiper and with a much greater appreciation of good music among the leaders of the church an article was inserted in the *Discipline* of 1931 setting forth the present more wholesome attitude,

"1. To insure spirituality and guard against formality in singing, it is the duty of Christians to praise God in the congregation by the use of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in their hearts to the Lord.

"2. Singing has for ages constituted and is today an important part of public worship. It is adapted to the edification of the heart and mind when entered into in the spirit of true devotion. We, therefore, hold that all should heartily engage in this part of the Church service. The Psalmist says, 'Let all the earth sing unto the Lord.'

"3. The entire congregation should be supplied with books so that all may participate in the songs of the sanctuary.

"4. It is recommended that a knowledge of at least the elements of music be acquired by all, but the spirit of religious song should never be sacrificed to artistic performances." <sup>82</sup>

Apparently it was felt that previously a disproportionate amount of time and emphasis had been placed upon preaching and not enough given to the experience of sharing in worship. Accordingly the emphasis in the last decade has been toward larger participation of all worshippers in the services. To this end a committee was appointed in 1934 and continued in 1938 to prepare a more fitting order of worship for church services and also more appropriate rituals for the special services of the church.

## 95. THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE CHURCH

Thirty annual conferences of the Evangelical Church sent their delegates to the general conference held in the Moxham Evangelical Church in 1938 in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Bishops Emeritus S. P. Spreng and M. T. Maze were present for part of the session. The work of guiding this quadrennial gathering fell to the Bishops John S. Stamm,

<sup>81</sup> *The Evangelical Herald*, 1921, p. 265.

<sup>82</sup> *Discipline*, 1931, p. 33.

George E. Epp, Elmer W. Praetorius and Charles H. Stauffacher, who were almost unanimously reelected as the episcopal leaders of the denomination. There were no changes in the personnel of the general secretaries of the denominational boards or in the offices of the editors of the church periodicals.

Among the outstanding acts of legislation at Johnstown were the decisions to join the World Council of Churches and to enter at once with much more earnestness into negotiations for a union with the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. The conference requested the Commission on Church Federation and Union to bring to the next general conference, if possible, a practical basis for the consummation of this merger.

This body also provided for the disestablishment of the Deaconess Society of the Evangelical Church in the United States after the sale of the property of the society and the discharging of its obligations. The Administrative Council was organized to correlate the work of all the general boards of the denomination, to assume the responsibilities of the previous Finance Commission, and to provide a body with limited legislative power in the interim of sessions of the general conference. Provision was also made for an administrative council in the annual conference and local church.

The work of Christian education throughout the entire denomination was thoroughly discussed and excellent plans were formulated for a larger program of education among the children, young people, and especially among the adults of the denomination. Plans were laid for a Men's Congress which was held in Elkhart, Indiana, in October, 1939, under the auspices of the Albright Brotherhood. During the quadrennium catechetical instruction was carried on in 700 catechetical classes and there were an additional 100 church membership classes conducted by pastors. Serious consideration was given to the matter of better catechetical materials and the Board of Christian Education was instructed to study the matter.

The rituals of the church which had been studied during the preceding quadrennium with a view to revision were ordered printed in their revised form for experimentation and the committee on revision was continued for another quadrennium for further study and report in 1942. A plan for the revision of the ministers' pension fund, the Superannuation Fund, was introduced and referred for further study throughout the church during the succeeding four years.

The total membership of the Evangelical Church in the United States and Canada had risen at the close of 1940 to 244,278. In addition there were 38,860 members in the missions and conferences abroad bringing the total membership to 283,138. There were in 1940 a total of 1910 itinerant ministers serving 2,539 organized congregations.



Of these 1,603 ministers are serving 2,010 congregations in North America. The Sunday Schools and Evangelical Leagues of Christian Endeavor and the Albright Brotherhood suffered losses in enrollment and attendance while the various Missionary Societies registered gains during the last quadrennium. The value of the properties of the denomination almost reached the sum of \$35,000,000. The total contributions of the church membership for all the purposes of the church reached \$5,091,162 which represented a gain of more than \$1,000,000 during the quadrennium. For a detailed statistical summary of the entire work of the Evangelical Church see Appendix F.

## 96. APPRECIATION OF FALLEN LEADERS

The years since the merger in 1922 marked the loss of many prominent denominational leaders among both the clergy and laity. As has been the case all through this volume, brevity compels the omission of statements of appreciation for the work of many persons who should have been given recognition for their excellent contributions to the work of the denomination. In a concluding paragraph of this nature it is possible to write briefly only of Bishops Thomas Bowman, S. C. Breyfogel, G. Heinmiller, L. H. Seager, M. T. Maze and J. F. Dunlap. One should like to do more than merely mention such outstanding educators as Dr. C. A. Bowman, Dr. A. E. Gobbel, and Dr. Warren F. Teel, former presidents of Albright College, such teachers like Dr. S. J. Gamertsfelter and Dr. G. B. Kimmel, former presidents of the Evangelical Theological Seminary, Dr. Augustus Kreckler and Dr. R. J. Lau, of the Evangelical School of Theology, and many others who have made a great contribution to the church and through the lives of their students have permanently influenced the leadership of the denomination.

### Bishop Thomas Bowman

Thomas Bowman was born in northeastern Pennsylvania, May 28, 1836, and was reared under the influence of the very earliest leaders of the Evangelical Church. He entered the church at the age of eighteen and in 1858 at the age of twenty-two was licensed to preach. The following year he received his first appointment as a minister on trial. Through his unusual ability as a preacher and evangelist he was rapidly advanced in the church and a few years later was chosen as a presiding elder in the East Pennsylvania Conference. In 1875 when only in his fortieth year he was elected as a bishop at the general conference held in the city of Philadelphia. During the fifty-five years from 1867 to 1922, Bishop Bowman attended the fifteen sessions of the general conference of his church. Surpassing all other previous records in his own or any other church in America, Bishop Bowman had served his

church actively as a bishop for forty years when at the general conference in Los Angeles in 1915 he retired from active service. Bishop Bowman lived to see the two branches of his church reunited in 1922 and died March 19, 1923. He had served his church well as a great preacher, a prolific writer and as an administrative leader.

### Bishop S. C. Breyfogel

Sylvanus Charles Breyfogel was born in Reading, Pennsylvania, July 20, 1851, the son of the Rev. and Mrs. Seneca Breyfogel of the East Pennsylvania Conference. On March 2, 1873, S. C. Breyfogel was granted a license as a minister by his father's conference. Fifteen years of his life were spent in the active pastorate until in 1886 his conference honored him by selecting him as one of its presiding elders. At the general conference in 1891, in his fortieth year, he was elected a bishop of his church and served in this capacity through thirty-nine years until his retirement as bishop-emeritus in 1930.

Rarely since the foundation of the Evangelical Church has there been such initiative and executive genius as that found in Bishop S. C. Breyfogel. His was the moving spirit which prompted the organization of many of the present branches of the work such as the Board of Church Extension, the Superannuation Fund, and the Evangelical School of Theology, of which he was president for thirty years until the time of his death. In the educational as well as the administrative work of his denomination, Bishop Breyfogel gave unexcelled leadership and always represented his church with honor in the numerous interdenominational bodies in which he served with distinction.

Throughout this volume numerous references have been made to his printed works and at the time of his death he left incomplete a number of excellent surveys of church law and trends in the denomination life. Bishop Breyfogel died November 24, 1934, leaving his church immeasurably enriched by his life and work.<sup>33</sup>

### Bishop G. Heinmiller

Gottlieb Heinmiller was born October 15, 1853, at Albany, New York, where he lived until at the age of fifteen he moved to Iowa with his parents. Two years later he was converted and received into the church. He attended Northwestern College and was granted a license to preach by the Iowa Conference in 1874. Four years later he went to Germany where he served congregations in Strasbourg and Dresden

<sup>33</sup> For a more extensive account of the life of Bishop Breyfogel see Albright, R. W., *Bishop S. C. Breyfogel—His Life and Contribution to the Evangelical Church*, a matriculation address read before the Evangelical School of Theology, Reading, Pa., Sept. 24, 1936, and printed in the *Bulletin of the Evangelical School of Theology*, Vol. XI, No. 1.

until 1885 when he was appointed the director of the Theological Seminary of the Evangelical Association in Reutlingen. In 1891 while attending the session of the general conference as delegate from Germany, he was elected as editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter* in which office he faithfully and efficiently served with rare distinction for twenty-four years. He was elected to the episcopacy in 1915 at Los Angeles, Calif., and served as a bishop until his death just a few days after the merging of the churches in October, 1922.

He served as the secretary at five sessions of the general conference, was the president of the Young People's Alliance for eight years, was secretary of the Board of Missions and later its president. He made a number of foreign trips in the interest of the missionary society. For eight years he served as the secretary of the Joint Commission on Church Union. Bishop Heinmiller was highly esteemed as a minister, and his relations with his brethren was dignified, yet cordial. He had the confidence and respect of all who knew him. Bishop Heinmiller left his benediction upon the entire Evangelical Church, being as well beloved in Europe as in America.

### Bishop L. H. Seager

Lawrence H. Seager was born near Tremont, Ohio, April 19, 1860, and gave a long service with rich blessing to his church through his seventy-seven years until his death on August 30, 1937. He received a thorough educational training in Ohio Northern University, Northwestern College and the Evangelical Theological Seminary. He was admitted as a minister in the Ohio Conference in 1888 and served a number of important congregations. After two years in the Ohio Conference as a presiding elder he became the editor of the Sunday School literature and in 1911 was named the president of his alma mater, Northwestern College. Four years later he was elected a bishop of the church in which office he served with distinction for nineteen years until his retirement as a bishop emeritus in 1934. Bishop Seager was a genial friend to all. In his death the church lost not only a constructive administrator but a personal friend to the many thousands whose lives he had touched.

### Bishop M. T. Maze

Mathew T. Maze was born in a log cabin near Lewisville, Henry County, Indiana, on November 16, 1857. After a brief experience as a teacher in his native state, Bishop and Mrs. Maze joined the homesteaders in Nebraska and lived in a sod house on the frontier. After five years he felt called to the ministry and was licensed to preach in 1888. He served the Nebraska Conference as a pastor, and as a district superintendent for nineteen years, until in 1914 he was chosen treasurer



and financial secretary of Western Union College, Le Mars, Iowa. His church elected him as a bishop in 1918 in which office he worked diligently to accomplish the merger of the United Evangelical Church and the Evangelical Association in 1922. In the reunited church, Bishop Maze continued to serve in the episcopacy until his retirement in 1934. While Bishop Maze had served on all the general boards of the church he gave unusually heroic service to the Missionary Society of which he was the president for eight years. He had also been the president of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches and for years was active in the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

When Bishop Maze departed from this life on October 28, 1940, the Evangelical Church had lost an expert administrator and a leader who with all his zeal for the efficient administration of his beloved church made friends of all whom he met.

### Bishop J. F. Dunlap

John F. Dunlap was born in York County, Pennsylvania, July 10, 1865. Before entering the ministry of the Evangelical Church he taught in the public schools of his native county for five years and then entered Union Biblical Institute where he was graduated in 1889. In 1906 he was elected a presiding elder of the Central Pennsylvania Conference but before the expiration of his first term was called to the presidency of Albright College in Myerstown, Pennsylvania, in 1909. In 1915 he was again elected a presiding elder of his conference and served in this office until the merging of the churches in 1922 at which time he was elected a bishop of the reunited church. Bishop Dunlap continued in this office until his retirement in 1934.

Bishop Dunlap served his church in memberships on many of its boards and in the councils of interdenominational bodies. During 1929 and 1930 he made an extended tour of the Oriental mission fields of the Evangelical Church. When Bishop Dunlap passed on to spend the first day of the year 1941 in the eternal kingdom the Evangelical Church lost a great leader and many Evangelicals and others lost a great friend.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

The first educational institution in the Evangelical Church was begun by the Pittsburgh Conference in 1852 at Berlin, Somerset County, Pennsylvania, and was called Albright Seminary. Three years later this school was discontinued and the Pittsburgh Conference joined with the Ohio Conference in supporting Greensburg Seminary. Although carefully supported by a number of friends and by Bishop Joseph Long in particular, this institution also found it impossible to continue after the Civil War. In the western portion of the Church, Blairstown Seminary was founded in Iowa in 1863 and was shorter lived than either of the aforementioned schools, largely because of the fact that it was begun during the crucial Civil War period.

The first permanent educational institution in the Evangelical Church was begun by the Central Pennsylvania Conference when at its sessions in York, Pennsylvania, in March, 1854, it was decided to establish Union Seminary. This school opened its doors in January, 1856, at New Berlin, Pennsylvania, then the headquarters of the Evangelical Church with the first church and the first publishing house of the denomination also located there. For two years during the Civil War, 1863-1865, Union Seminary closed its doors but by 1887 had made so much progress that it was incorporated as Central Pennsylvania College. In 1902 Central Pennsylvania College was merged with Albright College in Myerstown, Pa.

North Central College, then Northwestern College, traces its beginning to the Illinois Conference sessions held at Des Plaines, Illinois, in April, 1861. This body requested the Wisconsin, Indiana and Iowa Conferences to join them in founding an educational institution for the central conferences of the denomination. This school, at first located at Plainfield, was moved to Naperville, Illinois, in 1870 so that it might have the advantages of location on a railroad line. In this same city, The Union Biblical Institute of the Evangelical Association of North America was established in 1873. The name of this, the oldest and largest of the theological seminaries of the denomination, was changed in 1910 to The Evangelical Theological Seminary.

The East Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Church at its sessions in Millersburg, Pennsylvania, February 23-28, 1881, decided to establish their own educational institution and accordingly on August 19th of that year opened the doors of Schuylkill Seminary in the city of Reading, Pennsylvania. Very soon thereafter this institution was moved



## EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS



EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY (*Main Building*)



EVANGELICAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY (*Breyfogel Building*)



## EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS



ALBRIGHT COLLEGE (*Alumni Memorial Library*)



NORTH CENTRAL COLLEGE (*Old Main Building*)



WESTERN UNION COLLEGE (*Administration Building*)

to the village of Fredericksburg in Lebanon County in order that it might take advantage of a generous grant of land made by Col. John H. Lick. Sensing the loss of the advantages of a larger city, Schuylkill Seminary was moved back to Reading in September, 1902, where it was located on the campus of the former Selwyn Hall, a preparatory school of the Protestant Episcopal Church. After a little more than a decade this school became a Junior College and in 1923 was incorporated as Schuylkill College.

With the unfortunate division in the church in 1891, the East Pennsylvania Conference was sorely divided and its institution, Schuylkill Seminary, suffered considerably. Those students who belonged in the families and congregations of the United Evangelical Church left Schuylkill Seminary and enrolled in the newly formed Albright Collegiate Institute which was begun by the United Evangelical Church at Myerstown, Pennsylvania, on the campus formerly occupied by Palatinate College of the Reformed Church in the United States. This institution was incorporated as Albright College in 1895 and in 1902 was merged with the Central Pennsylvania College to form the larger Albright College at Myerstown.

Lafayette Seminary was established by the Oregon Conference in 1889 at Lafayette, Oregon, and at the time of the church division became the property of the United Evangelical Church. In 1900 this school was merged with La Creole Academic Institution at Dallas, Oregon, and named Dallas College. The high requirements of the state educational laws forced Dallas College out of existence in 1914. From 1916 this property was used by the Oregon Bible Training College which was also discontinued two years later.

The Illinois Conference of the United Evangelical Church combined their interest and support with the Des Moines, Platte River and Northwestern Conferences of that denomination to lay plans for a college in 1899 and by April 10, 1900, had arranged for the incorporation of the Le Mars Normal School Association into the Western Union College of the United Evangelical Church at Le Mars, Iowa. In 1922 this school became Western Union College of the Evangelical Church.

Through the merging of the churches in 1922, the new denomination found it impractical to operate two colleges as close to each other as Myerstown and Reading, Pennsylvania, approximately twenty-five miles. Accordingly plans were laid for the uniting of these institutions. These culminated in February 15, 1928, when it was decided to move Albright College to the Schuylkill College campus in Reading and to maintain the name Albright College for the larger merged institution.

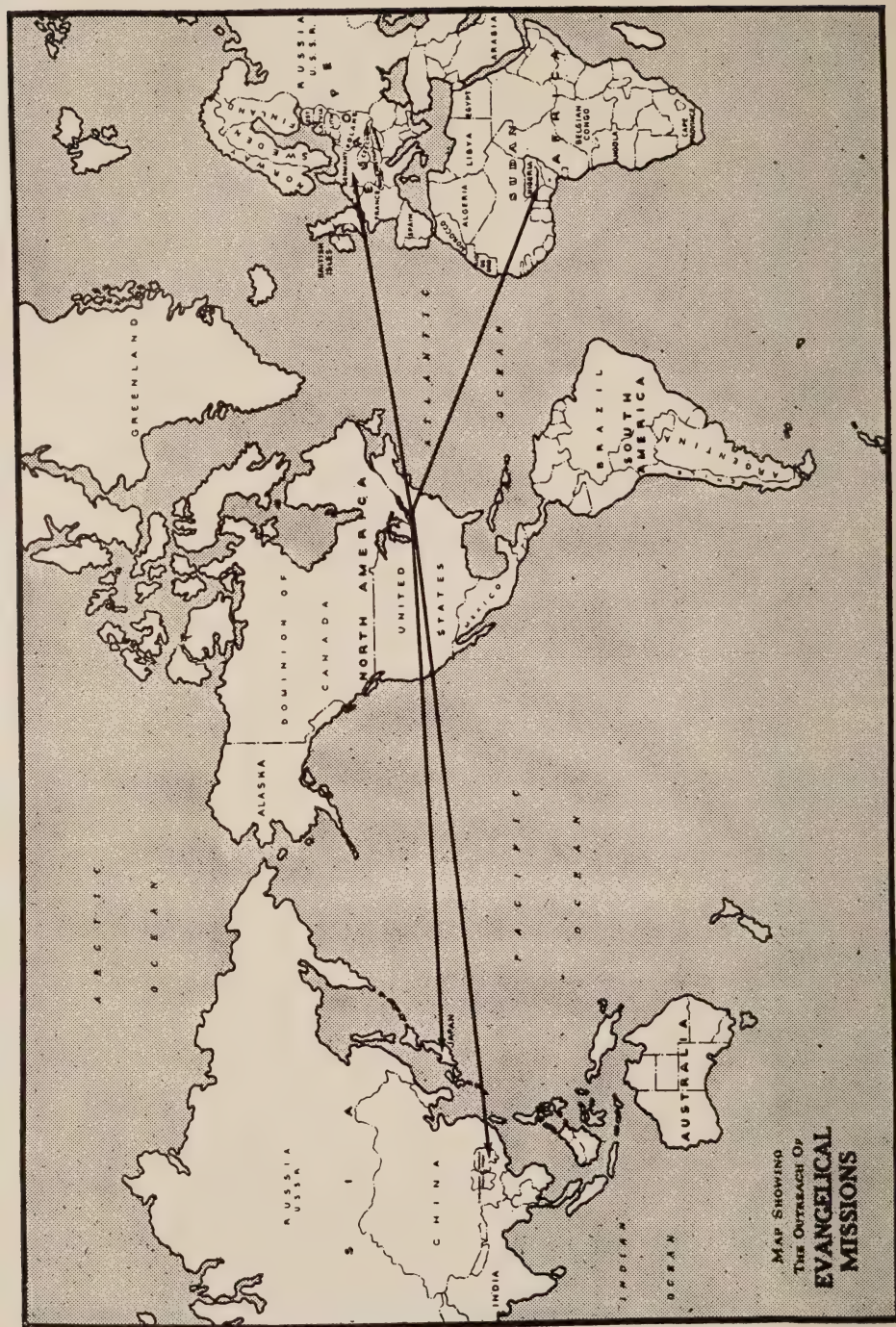
Almost from the time of its beginning in Reading, the Schuylkill Seminary offered courses in theology and related subjects. From 1905 a department of theology was maintained in this school and the first

class in theology was graduated in 1907. With the merging of the colleges in 1928, this department was separately organized as The Evangelical School of Theology and has since then been the theological seminary for the eastern areas of the denomination.

The European conferences felt their need for a properly trained ministry soon after their establishment and by 1877 organized the Predigerseminar at Reutlingen, Germany, where it has continued to the present. For a number of years at least one member of the Evangelical Church has been included on the faculty of the Interdenominational Seminary, Aoyama Gakuin, Tokyo, Japan, where the native ministers of the Evangelical Church receive their theological training. In China the denomination has two representatives on the faculty of the Yale Middle School.







MAP SHOWING  
THE OUTREACH OF  
EVANGELICAL  
MISSIONS

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN OTHER LANDS AND AMONG OTHER PEOPLES

Although the first missionary society of the Evangelical Association was not organized until 1838, the true missionary spirit dominated the life and activity of the leaders of the denomination from the very beginning. In 1816, the very year in which the first general conference was held, the Rev. John Dreisbach visited and preached in Canada. However, it was to be twenty more years before the first active missionary work was to be begun in the Dominion. The middle of the century, 1850, saw the work of the Evangelical Association established in Germany, and in 1875 the first mission in the Orient was founded in Japan. The missions of the United Evangelical Church in China were begun in Hunan by the Rev. C. Newton Dubs in 1900. Four years later the Revs. C. E. Ranck, A. Butzbach, and Ernest Kelhöfer, opened the first mission of the Evangelical Association in Hunan, China. The home mission work among the Italians in the United States was begun at Wellsville, Ohio, in 1904 and in 1921 the Board of Missions of the United Evangelical Church opened the Red Bird Mission among the under-privileged of Kentucky. About 1906 the first Evangelical missionaries, the Rev. and Mrs. C. W. Guinter of the United Evangelical Church, began a mission work in Nigeria in coöperation with the Sudan United Mission. By 1926 the Evangelical Church assumed sole responsibility for this work and began the first mission station of the denomination on the Dark Continent. The missions in Europe and the Orient have expanded most rapidly. Although the history of the Evangelical Church in any one of these lands might well be expanded to a volume all its own, for the purposes of this history this story must be told briefly and confined to this one chapter.

#### 97. THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN CANADA

Following the War of the Revolution and on through the War of 1812 a number of German families moved from Pennsylvania into Ontario, where the German people were of various religious faiths, predominantly Mennonite.<sup>1</sup> During the next few decades, many others of the same nationality, who emigrated to Canada directly from Germany, were added to their number. The region in which most of these people established their new homes covered the counties of Waterloo, Lincoln, Welland, Haldimand, and Wentworth. This region

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<sup>1</sup> Cassel, Daniel K., *Geschichte der Mennoniten*, Philadelphia, 1890, pp. 236-264.



was then called "Upper Canada" and now comprises largely the province of Ontario.

Bishop Seybert who later lived and worked among these German people declared that most of them were Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, Mennonites, Old Baptists, and Evangelicals, as some called themselves. The first three groups were "in thick moral darkness because they did not have the light of life" and "even their preachers were mostly immoral characters." Seybert describes the religious life of the Mennonites and Old Baptists or Dunkers as somewhat better, at least outwardly.

"Many of them endeavored to lead a quiet, virtuous, peaceable life. But as regards the spiritual life that comes from God, the new birth and the renewal of the heart by the Holy Ghost, they were generally ignorant, knowing nothing of the blessedness of true godliness. . . . Among the New Mennonites some may have had a religious heart experience, but they were very egotistical and separated from all other good men and could, therefore, do nothing for the improvement of the German people of Upper Canada, hence there was no improvement in the general condition of these unfortunate people."<sup>2</sup>

The ministers of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ also preached and began what promised to be a very successful mission, but, unfortunately these German people left no permanent organization in Canada. The group of their followers were left unattended and finally dispersed and joined other churches.

As early as 1816 John Dreisbach preached among these groups but since the denomination was unable at that time to support any such missionary project and since he was needed in Pennsylvania during these formative years of the Evangelical Association, no permanent congregations were established in Canada at that time.

A few years later a number of families from Waterloo, Ontario, moved into the State of Ohio and there came into contact with the preachers of the Evangelical Association. They were very favorably impressed by them, and since they had found help for their own religious living they wrote of their spiritual experience to their friends back home in Canada. Just about this time Jacob Vogt (or Focht) who lived near Niagara Falls, New York, had occasion to cross over into Canada to assist a Roman Catholic in rescuing his kidnapped daughter. While there he became acquainted with some pious German families living near Sodom, who attended Methodist camp meetings for their spiritual edification. Vogt told them of the itinerant German preachers in the States and of their spiritual ministry. Realizing very keenly their religious impoverishment and their great need of spiritual help, they requested Vogt to send some of these preachers into their midst. Vogt gladly complied with their request and informed the Evangelical

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<sup>2</sup> Seybert, John, *The Beginning and Progress of the Work in Upper Canada*, quoted in OH, p. 268f.

preachers of this real opportunity among the German people in Upper Canada. It was in response to this appeal that the Rev. J. G. Zinser visited Ontario and preached at the homes of Martin and Christian Shaub (or Schaub) near Chippawa.

About the same time the work was begun in Waterloo, a region about one hundred miles northwest of Chippawa. These two points became the nucleus for the work of the Evangelical Association in Canada. In December, 1836, Charles Hammer preached in Berlin, now Kitchener, Ontario, and was soon followed by other preachers, Joseph Harlacher, G. Dellinger, J. Riegel, Christian Holl, and M. Eis. These men preached in log schoolhouses and in humble homes, but laid well the foundations of the work which was to prosper so remarkably in the next few years. In 1838 the young Rev. Michael Eis made a good beginning in Lincoln County and the Niagara District. He preached at Chippawa, Sodom, Stonycreek and Rainham.

It was in this year of 1838 that the first Missionary Society was formed in the denomination and by the Conference of 1839 \$500 had been collected for missionary work. It was determined to establish four missions. Two of these were the Waterloo and the Black Creek Missions in Canada.

The first Evangelical Sunday School in Canada and the first German Sunday School in the entire Dominion was founded in Berlin in 1837. A number of families gathered on Sundays to instruct their children in the German language and in the Scriptures. Among the founders of this school, which was regularly organized in 1839, were J. Hailer, J. Hoffman, J. Sauer, H. Hiestand, and H. W. Peterson, editor and proprietor of *The Canada Museum*, the first German newspaper in Canada. This school met for a time in the home and workshop of J. Hailer on the east corner of King and Scott Streets in what is now Kitchener, Ontario. On June 18, 1839, the day when the school was fully organized, there were forty-one persons enrolled. A little later this Sunday School met in the Town Hall until the First Church on Queen Street, South, was erected and dedicated in 1841. This church was later moved to Elgin Street where substantially the identical building now stands and is used as a dwelling house.<sup>8</sup>

Even before the regular establishment of missions, a camp meeting, beginning August 23, 1839, was held on the land of David Erb, two miles north of the village of Waterloo. These Christians had planned to attend another camp meeting one hundred and fifteen miles distant on the Buffalo Circuit in New York, but when this camp meeting was cancelled they decided to have a camp of their own. Bishop Seybert was invited to come to their assistance which he did, after suffering

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<sup>8</sup> *AL*, p. 87.

illness through a ride of almost four hundred miles in the intense heat of summer. Fifteen tents were pitched on the camp ground and services were continued about a week with remarkable success. On Wednesday morning, August 29, 1839, at the close of the meeting the first congregations in Upper Canada were formed; one in Berlin and the other in the surrounding neighborhood. The twenty-six persons comprising these classes had come from various backgrounds, with not a few from the Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed groups.

In like fashion the Black Creek Mission prospered so remarkably during its first year that it was changed from a mission to a circuit and for the second year received two preachers. The membership at the close of 1839 was eighty-four. At the East Pennsylvania Conference of 1840, Michael Eis and Michael Sindlinger were sent to the new Black Creek Circuit and Joseph Harlacher to Waterloo. The following spring Jacob Dereich was sent as a colleague to Harlacher. By 1847 a presiding elder district was formed in Canada and in that same year the remarkable "Mennonite Conversion" occurred twenty miles north of Niagara. A Bishop of the Mennonite group and a number of his followers were converted in an Evangelical meeting and because of their experience were expelled from the Mennonite High Council. Jacob M. Moyer and Joseph Frey were prominent in this Mennonite episode. Perhaps nowhere in all the area of the denomination did the church succeed so well in its early years as in the first decade of the work in Canada.

Joseph Harlacher was responsible for the opening of many new preaching places during his ministry in the early eighteen forties. Among his newly found sites for preaching were an unused log church twenty miles west of Berlin and about four miles from Hamburg; private homes in this vicinity owned by families by the name of Muerner, Linglebach, and Kleinknecht; the Bieber home in Puslinch Township, Strassburg; the homes of Mr. Guggisberger, Mr. Geyer, Mr. Wing, grandfather of the Rev. M. L. Wing, Mr. Dewitt, Mr. Feick; a schoolhouse west of Huron near Stratford; the homes of J. Yost and J. Baumann in Woolwich Township; and the home of a Mr. Stricker in the forest beyond Heidelberg. On one occasion Harlacher pinned a note to a large sugar maple tree stating that on a certain Sunday he would preach there. Upon his arrival at the appointed time, he found a large group of people to whom he preached with good effect. To plan and accomplish such extensive work meant tireless effort and unselfish living. Harlacher preached two and three times each Sunday and once each weekday except Saturday. Time and again violent opposition on the part of members of other churches and even sometimes on the part of infidels caused Harlacher and his kind a great deal of trouble. On such occasions other communities and homes



were sought out carefully for the work of preaching. Under persecution near Hamburg, Harlacher sought the humble home of a wayward Mennonite by the name of Eby and preached with such effect that a congregation was later established there. At the time of the dedication of the church in Berlin on September 25, 1841, Harlacher was hanged in effigy. Striking into one of the very worst settlements in Canada, Harlacher preached from a wagon in Petersburg. Here he befriended the Staebler family who later gave several sons to the ministry of the Evangelical Association and many members as well. No less than twelve important congregations owe their beginning to the work of this pioneer preacher, Joseph Harlacher.

Other outstanding ministers whose important work in the early years meant so much for the success of the Evangelical Association in Canada were the Revs. Philip Schwilly, Jacob Gross, Frederick Scharfe, William Schmidt, Solomon Weber, and Theobald Schneider. The heroic work of these men becomes the more outstanding when one scans the extent of these early circuits. With Waterloo and Berlin as a center, the field extended westward thirty-six miles, including appointments at Petersburg, Hamburg and Kleinknecht's, to within six miles of Stratford. Southwestward the field extended to Tavistock and south-eastward to Blenheim. Eastward from Berlin the route led to York, Vaughn, Markham and Whitechurch. Intermediate appointments here included Hespeler and Morriston. Northward the work extended to St. Jacobs and northwestward it was fourteen miles to the so-called "King's Forest." In 1841 this entire area comprised one circuit and the annual cash salary of the minister was \$43.

The church in Jordon was dedicated July 17, 1850, and a substantial membership supported this work. In 1872 the congregation built a large brick church in Campden which was renovated in 1887 and at that time had about one hundred and thirty members with a Sunday School of 220 members. By 1863 the work of the Evangelical Association in Ontario had developed so greatly that it was formed into a separate annual conference, the Canada Conference, consisting of about fifty ministers and about six thousand members.

In most respects the problems of the Evangelical Church in Canada have been the same as the problems of the church in the United States. Almost all of the churches in the eastern provinces of the Dominion use either the English or the French language almost exclusively. The churches of the northwestern provinces, with some notable exceptions, are still almost exclusively German. These are scattered over a vast area covering three provinces; Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta with beginnings in British Columbia. Many of the German group are from the pietists and lead a devout pious life. Due to the vast distance from Ontario and to the fact that many of the preachers were not able,

on account of these distances, to attend the sessions of the annual conference, a new conference was formed in 1926 and called the Northwest Canada Conference. This group has 25 ministers under appointment and 2,400 members. The Canada Conference now has 38 ministers under appointment and 9,000 members.

One of the problems in the Canadian Conferences during the past decade has been their relation with the other denominations during the formation of the United Church of Canada. The Evangelical churches in Canada have always felt themselves an integral part of the denomination and have loyally shared in all of the responsibilities of the church, and have responded to every denominational appeal. With the formation of the United Church of Canada, a new problem has arisen. The Methodist, Congregational, and the Presbyterian, slightly more than one-half of the Dominion churches, formed an organization, called the United Church of Canada, and have made overtures to the Evangelical churches to unite with them. The Evangelical Church has received these overtures and has given them most earnest, sympathetic, and prolonged consideration, for the most cordial relation exists between the Evangelical Church in Canada and the United Church. It is not to be denied that advantages would accrue through a union with the United Church and yet many in the Evangelical Church in Canada have so long enjoyed that family-like fellowship that exists in the Evangelical Church which, to say the least, will make any such separation very difficult. In at least two sessions of the general conference this problem has been discussed and it now appears that until the two Canadian conferences are both ready to unite with the United Church of Canada perhaps neither of the Evangelical Conferences of the Dominion will do so. There is no other German element in the United Church of Canada and therefore it appears that such union will hardly occur in the near future.

## 101. THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION IN EUROPE <sup>4</sup>

### A. In Germany

Little did John Walter, co-laborer of Jacob Albright, realize when, in 1815 at a camp meeting on the farm of Mr. Faber near Jonestown, Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, he predicted that "We shall take this country, and the work of conversion will be extended to Europe yet," that within a generation the European part of his prophecy would be fulfilled. Late in the first half of the nineteenth century, Sebastian Kurz left his home in Württemberg, Germany, and settled in York

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<sup>4</sup> Although the General Conference of 1922 adopted the name "The Evangelical Church" it also provided that in Europe the name "The Evangelical Association" should be continued to avoid confusion with the State Church in Germany.

County, Pennsylvania. Here he came under the influence of Evangelical preachers and found great joy in the religious experience which became his through their guidance. Frequently he thought of his fellow German countrymen back in the Fatherland who were without such leadership and without the satisfaction he had come to enjoy in his religious experience. Feeling "moved by the Spirit," Sebastian Kurz sailed back to Germany from Baltimore on May 1, 1845 with the specific intention of leading his friends there to a renewal of religious interest and into a vital Christian experience. Leaders of the church in America very likely did not take his promise with too much seriousness since they knew nothing of his abilities as a leader and since he had done no preaching here. W. W. Orwig consulted with him and gave him a statement of the doctrines and principles of the church as well as a number of copies of the publications of the church press. Yet in 1850 Orwig wrote:

"We do not doubt, however, that he has already accomplished some introductory work for a mission in that country, and that he would prove a helpful assistant to a missionary in Europe."<sup>5</sup>

The friendly exhortations of Kurz prompted his neighbors in Bonlanden near Stuttgart to request him to preach and so in his own house and later in a larger house belonging to a friendly neighbor, this Christian zealot preached the message of a rich religious experience and a pious Christian life. Soon he had two other appointments in this vicinity which is still a very rustic community, despite its proximity to metropolitan Stuttgart.

Reports of Kurz's work began to appear in *Der Christliche Botschafter*<sup>6</sup> and aroused so much interest that the leaders of the denomination in America began to take these reports seriously and to consider them a Macedonian call. At a camp meeting held on the farm of Jacob Esher at Des Plaines, Illinois, John J. Esher, his son, later a bishop of the denomination, received contributions for a mission in Germany and in the course of a few hours had gathered three hundred dollars for this purpose. Opposition from religious leaders in Germany and the limited religious liberty enjoyed at the time all conspired to impede the progress of Kurz's work and hindered the spread of the type of religious experience which he advocated.

At that time Germany was still composed of many petty principalities each with its peculiar type of governmental as well as ecclesiastical loyalties and organization. It was to be another twenty years before the unification work of Kaiser Wilhelm I and Bismarck was to bring an integrated empire into existence. Nevertheless throughout these years many revolts against local rulers occurred especially in Baden and

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<sup>5</sup> CB, October 16, 1846 and Feb. 1, 1850.



Württemberg and this general area of what is now southwestern Germany. The most daring of these revolutions occurred in 1848 and was led by Carl Schurz, Frederick Hecker, Gustav Struve, Robert Blum and their kind. These revolts were not successful and although social and religious ills were not immediately cured the fundamental backgrounds and basic organizations and faiths were preserved for the future enrichment of the life of the people.

This was also the age of high rationalism. Although the origin of this movement is attributed to John S. Semler (1725-1791) it was a natural outgrowth of the recent scientific discoveries, English Deism and the philosophical writings of Immanuel Kant and other prominent philosophers. This rationalistic tendency led to a larger place for man and a much smaller and insignificant place for God in the thinking and planning of leaders, even the religious leaders, of the German people. About two-thirds of the forty million people then living in Germany had completely followed such rationalistic teaching.<sup>6</sup>

Several clear-sighted leaders of the church saw the dangers confronting the church in such a time of political unrest and theological and philosophical uncertainty and radicalism. Like voices crying alone in the wilderness here and there, these prophets called the church to its responsibilities.<sup>7</sup> With Henhöfer stood men like Gustav Knak and Professor A. Tholuck who sensed the imminent danger that threatened the future of religion in Germany in these times of revolution. Wrote Professor Tholuck from Halle under date of March 26, 1850:

"If you should ask me whether the religious condition has been growing better or worse since the March revolution in 1848, I am compelled as far as human observation extends, to answer, decidedly worse. The indifference, yea, enmity toward religion has increased very much. The attendance upon public worship is entirely neglected in some Prussian provinces."<sup>8</sup>

Then he goes on to describe services of worship in large churches in Halle as well as in the cities along the Rhine where in many instances congregations numbered twelve, ten and even less at the times of stated services of worship. He continues in a somewhat more optimistic vein when he suggests that among the faithful a deeper religious sense appeared after 1850.

"So much is certain, that truly regenerated and living Christians among the clergy and laity are more zealous now than heretofore, whilst those who are not awakened from their sleep in sin, continually sink lower and are losing what they yet seemed to possess."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Henkelmann, Fr. K., in *Lutherischer Kirchenbote*, Bavaria, 2te Ostertag, 1850.

<sup>7</sup> Henhöfer, Aloys, *Baden und seine Revolution*, 1850.

<sup>8</sup> Tholuck, A., in *Evangelisches Christentum*, May, 1850.

The deplorable religious conditions in Germany at the time of the return of Sebastian Kurz are also thoroughly attested by American theological scholars who visited Europe during these years. Philip Schaff wrote:

"Among the friends of the missionary cause in Germany, and more particularly among the Pietists of Württemberg, the revolutionary disturbances of the previous year have frequently awakened the thought, that the apostate European Christendom was at the threshold of severe judgment, which would turn to the advantage of heathendom, just as the rejection of the Jews of the first century redounded to the conversion of the heathen."<sup>9</sup>

The great leader among the German Methodists, Dr. William Nast, found the German church as Schaff and others had described it and also found some few German religious leaders like Kapff in Stuttgart and Hoffman, Gossner and Mallet in Bremen who desired that a religious zeal like that of the Methodists might be awakened in the State Church of Germany.<sup>10</sup>

Still there were those in America, however, who in spite of all this evidence of the need for a religious awakening in Germany, seriously questioned the advisability of sending Christian missionaries to a land already nominally Christian and which had produced some of the finest of the cultural and artistic contributions to be found in all the world.

In the fall of 1849, Charles G. Koch and John Nikolai, both ministers of the Ohio Conference, spontaneously expressed great concern over the religious life of their friends in Germany one day as they met in Cleveland. By common agreement, Nikolai wrote a stirring missionary article "*In-und Ausländische Missionen*" (Home and Foreign Missions) which appeared in *Der Christliche Botschafter* November 15, 1849. The same issue carried an article by Koch entitled "*Ein Blick in die Verhältnisse der Zeit*" (A glimpse into the conditions of the times). Nikolai offered to be one of a hundred persons to raise \$1,000 for a mission in Germany and \$1,500 was soon subscribed. W. W. Orwig, then editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*, also sponsored this proposed missionary project and soon voices were raised in its favor throughout the church. Since 1850 was a jubilee year, just fifty years after the founding of the denomination, and since the money for a mission in Germany continued to pour in, it was determined to open the mission there that year.

The East Pennsylvania Conference which met in Philadelphia February 27, 1850, took the initiative in this matter and proposed that a board of five members, one elected by each conference, together with

<sup>9</sup> Schaff, Philip, *Kirchenfreund*, April, 1849; also June, 1849 and 1850.

<sup>10</sup> Nast, William, *Methodist Review*, September, 1889, p. 669.

the bishops, should take charge of the matter. Accordingly they selected John P. Leib as their member on the board. Two weeks later the West Pennsylvania Conference concurred in this action and named W. W. Orwig as their member of the board. William Muenz was named from New York, John G. Zinser from Ohio and Samuel Baumgartner from Illinois, and these men together with Bishops Seybert and Long met in Pittsburgh on September 9, 1850. They decided to send John C. Link of the West Pennsylvania Conference and John G. Marquardt of the New York Conference to Germany immediately. The latter was unavoidably detained, but Link sailed from New York November 19th on the *Washington* and arrived in Bremerhaven on December 8, 1850. Due to the illness of his wife, Link and his family remained at his home city of Lauterbach in Hesse-Darmstadt for some weeks. Early in January, however, he made his visit to Stuttgart and on January 7, 1851 first visited Kurz in Bonlanden.

Link was most gladly received by Kurz and most graciously by the Methodists as well as by the State Church preachers in whose homes he visited and pulpits he preached. During his short visit, Link distributed tracts which he had brought with him through the courtesy of the American Tract Society. More cordial reception none could expect than Link received on his first visit to Württemberg. He returned to his family in Lauterbach the following week with glowing reports of his work. During the days of Mrs. Link's illness, missionary Link found opportunities to preach in Hesse-Darmstadt and laid the ground work of what was to be the base for the second missionary soon to be appointed.

On March 5, 1851, Link with his family moved to Schwabenland (Württemberg) and began his most successful missionary career there in residence. Now that they realized that Link was to be a permanent competitor of theirs some of the State Church pastors no longer felt so kindly toward him. But the work prospered unusually; many persons were converted, and the members and friends in the homeland rejoiced greatly at the success of their first overseas mission.

In September, 1851, the general conference in session at Flat Rock, Ohio, determined to send an additional missionary to Europe and selected John Nikolai, who sailed November 2nd, and arrived at Bremerhaven November 21, 1851. Due to the excellent foundation laid in Lauterbach by John Link, Nikolai was stationed there while Link devoted his full time to the Stuttgart area. Unfortunately these favorable developments in the Evangelical missionary venture in Germany were not to be uninterrupted. Finding considerable displeasure at the success of these foreign missionaries, the local pastors of the State Church took occasion to take the case to their superiors and even to the officers of the state. Undoubtedly the fact that Christian mis-



sionaries had come from the young nation in America to work in their old Christian nation must have caused these religious leaders no little annoyance. The inevitable result was a long period of suppression and even persecution for the first Evangelical preachers and members in Germany.

The most severe blow of all came on February 11, 1852 when a decree from the Royal City Directory ordered Link and Nikolai to leave the city and the country within twenty-four hours. Through the intervention of the American Consul, a Mr. Fleischmann, they were permitted to remain in Germany but forbidden to conduct services of worship in public places. Consequently these men gave themselves largely to personal work and occasionally conducted services in the homes of close friends of the movement. Within a short time, through the splendid coöperation of the State Attorney, Von Reuss, and other patrons, a petition was presented to the royal ministry and the restriction against these Evangelicals was removed. Public services were once again permitted and their success became much more widespread than before.

A sad experience befell this small company of Evangelicals when on October 28, 1852, Mrs. Link, then only twenty-five years of age, died after a lingering illness from tuberculosis acquired, it was believed, on her voyage from America. This was also a period of drought and much distress in this region of Germany. Having constantly felt a very keen interest in the work in Germany, the friends in America took this opportunity to send several thousand Gulden (about \$1,000) to help the needy. From this time on this close bond of friendship between the membership of the denomination in America and Europe has been demonstrated on numerous occasions by similar acts of kindness and generosity.

On the very day after the death of Mrs. Link, Nikolai and Link were again forbidden to preach in public. Consequently they resorted, as before, to the quiet personal and pastoral care of their friends and converts. Soon afterward Nikolai visited the market-town, Plochingen on the Neckar, and rented rooms in the residence of Mr. Negele where they were permitted to hold services. Shortly afterward he also conducted prayer meetings and organized a missionary society which in its first year received one hundred Gulden. Sensing keenly the value of distributing Christian literature, even as their American missionaries had also done, a reading room was established and the educational work of the church was well grounded. In this very place on July 15, 1860, the first Sunday School of the denomination in Europe was established.

Easter Sunday, 1854, is another well marked date in the history of the denomination in Europe, for it was on this day that a notable

revival began in Plochingen during which at least thirty persons were added to the church. Among them were those who in later years became prominent leaders of the church such as Gottlieb Fuessle, later editor of *Der Evangelische Botschafter*, and John M. Haug, later a presiding elder of the Indiana Conference. Good fortune also smiled on the work in that these workers had sufficiently won the confidence of the Methodist leaders in Germany so that the Evangelical preachers were frequently asked to assist Gottlob Mueller, founder of the Wesleyan Mission in Württemberg.

Misfortune once again struck into the Evangelical ranks when Nikolai suffered a throat disease which gradually deprived him of his ability to speak, despite the fact that he had consulted the best specialists in Germany in seeking a cure. The Board of Missions consequently recalled him to America and named John G. Wollpert of the Ohio Conference to take his place. Wollpert sailed from New York on June 13, 1857 and on July 5th preached his first sermon in Stuttgart and Plochingen. Nikolai preached his farewell sermon on July 26th and the following day set out for America. Wollpert, like these other missionaries, was a native German and preached his first sermon in his home village of Wannweil, near Reutlingen, on July 8th where his former teacher, Mr. Goebel, was the leader of song. The fall and winter of 1857 proved to be a period of remarkable success and growth for the work in Germany, despite the financial panic back in America which meant curtailed resources for the mission. During these months new preaching places were established in the villages of Hochdorf, Weilheim, Nattheim near Heidenheim, and at St. Bernhardt, a suburb of Esslingen.

During the following year Gottlob Mueller, founder of the Wesleyan Methodist mission in Winnenden, Württemberg in 1832, died and his work was assigned by the parent missionary society in England to John Gottlieb Steinlee and Mr. Holebaus. Both Steinlee and Holebaus were Germans who had migrated to America and while there had joined the Evangelical Association. When they returned to Germany before the Evangelical mission was established, they found the Methodist services very congenial and so attached themselves to it. All through these years the relations of the Methodists and the Evangelicals in Germany have been very cordial.

While John C. Link traveled in America for six months in 1858 raising larger funds for the missionary work in Germany, the work of the mission was attended to by John Wollpert who preached widely and was also ably assisted by class leaders, exhorters, the very young potter's apprentice Gottlieb Fuessle, and two German soldiers, Mathias Erdle and Christian Raith, who had been converted in the revival in Stuttgart.

Until this time the Evangelical congregations sang from locally published hymnals, the *Württemberg Hymnal* and Hiller's *Schatz-Kästlein*. In 1858 it was determined to publish a denominational hymnal in Germany and the first European edition of *Die Geistliche Viole* was issued with an appendix. It became so popular that soon afterward a fifth edition was required to meet the demands of the people.

This year of apparent important gains was not without its severe reverses also. Wollpert was severely examined by the State Church officials as to his doctrinal position and also as to his intentions and motives in the work of the Evangelical mission. At Ebersbach in Oberamt Goeppingen four preachers were fined seven Gulden and thirty Kreuzer (approximately three dollars). Wollpert was forbidden to preach in Ossweil near Ludwigsburg and for a time circumvented this restriction by appearing at the meeting and saying that he had been forbidden to preach in public but since they had gathered to hear a sermon, he would tell them what he would have said had he been permitted to preach. Afterward he concluded, "Now go in peace to your homes, and meditate upon that which I would have preached to you had I been permitted to do so." Finally the pastor of the established church here invoked an obsolete law forbidding the assembly of more than twelve to fifteen persons in any place save the church, in order that he might suppress this ever increasing popularity of the Evangelical preachers. Because of this opposition many of the peace loving and sincere German citizens were won to a friendly relation with the Evangelical Church. Many of these members of the State Church became the outspoken friends and even members of the new mission work and once again the old story of propagating a movement by openly persecuting it had become history.

The first native German preacher of the Evangelical Association was Gottlieb Fuessle, who assisted Link and Wollpert first as a chorister and later as an exhorter. On May 15, 1859, when he was but nineteen, he was granted the following document which he carefully consecrated in prayer:

"Brother Gottlieb Fuessle is appointed and authorized as a helper in the work of the Lord, so long as he conducts himself in a Godly manner in accordance with the Word of God.

"(Signed) John C. Link,  
John G. Wollpert."

The word "helper" instead of "preacher" was carefully inserted into this document because of the open opposition of the established ministers toward the Evangelical movement and the natural reaction which they might have had toward a young "preacher" untrained in theology.

The year 1859 was marked by several other very important events in the movement. The first church building was dedicated July 31st



in Plochingen near Esslingen. This church was really a dwelling house with a large hall which was named "Tabernacle of Emanuel." For a number of years this place served as the center for the gatherings of the church until a suitable chapel was built to serve this purpose. This same year, 1859, marked the first "Big Meeting" which was preceded by a conference of fifteen persons from different regions of the church. Among the other matters of business was an item expressing sincere appreciation of the church in America for sending missionaries to Germany.

In this same year the ministers of the Evangelical Association found many new centers for their preaching. In the upper Neckar Valley they now preached in Grossbettlingheim, Nuertlingen, Neckartheilfingen and Groetzingen. At about the same time these preachers obtained permission to preach in the villages of Schlierbach, Rosswalden, Thomashardt and Hegenlohe. The more numerous appointments made the work of the ministers very heavy and services were therefore conducted with less regularity. Then, too, there was the ever present opposition of the established clergy which made their efforts exceedingly difficult. Young Fuessle became the subject of too many official bannings and attacks because of his youth and lack of proper training for the ministry as the German State Church demanded. Once his former pastor actually suggested that Fuessle attend the Mission Institute in Basel that he might train for a place in the German Church. All this Fuessle rejected that he might remain with the Evangelical group whom he loved and among whom he was finding so large a place of useful service. Many times Fuessle actually endangered his life by exposure to angry crowds and to all kinds of weather as he walked miles in his regular preaching journeys. By April, 1860, Fuessle was formally received into the itinerant ministry and became the assistant to Wollpert on Plochingen Circuit which then numbered twenty-four preaching places.

Bishop Seybert's death in 1860 caused much sadness among the Evangelicals in Germany for they knew of his great interest in them and of his support of the work in their country. This year also brought new preaching places, the most important of which was the Oberamtstadt, Esslingen. On July 15th, the first Sunday School was begun in Plochingen with an attendance of 127 which had grown to 200 by the following Sunday. By 1894 there were 368 such schools with 1,416 officers and 22,013 enrolled. George Miller's "*Practical Christianity*," which had appeared for the first time in America more than forty years earlier, was reprinted in Germany in 1860 and prepared the ground for a larger work of the denomination through its wide circulation among appreciative readers. By this time *Der Christliche Botschafter* was also circulated among a large number of German families who received it from relatives and friends in America.

The following year Mrs. Wollpert, who had suffered a great deal from tuberculosis, died on April 22nd at the age of thirty-seven. She had been the originator of the Sunday School idea in Plochingen. Matthias Erdle became an itinerant minister this year and replaced Fuessle in Plochingen while Fuessle went to the Oberland area to preach in the regions surrounding Heidenheim and Ulm. This field consisted of twenty regular appointments. In July, 1861, John Philip Schnatz arrived from America, having been sent as an additional missionary by the Ohio Conference. The intention of the Board of Missions was that Schnatz should assume the direction of the work in Stuttgart while Link could then open a mission in Switzerland. Link refused this assignment and a later order to preach in Baden and soon found his relations with the board so strained that a breach became inevitable. While open opposition to the work of the Evangelical preachers continued, in a number of communities they also came to make important friends. Among these were such prominent established clergymen as Direktor Philip Paulus, Mueller of Dettingen, Ehmann, and others. Courageously the small group of Evangelicals made an appeal to the Staendekammer (legislature) of Württemberg and finally obtained a decree which permitted them a great deal more freedom to carry on their work. Opposition abated also because of the death of several of the most belligerent opponents during this time. A marked step of progress was the removal of the congregation in Stuttgart from their previous location in the Linden to Langenstrasse where their new church was called the "Hall of the Brethren of the Evangelical Association." The financial stress in the European mission during the American Civil War severely limited their work and in many instances required the contraction of debt.

Many rejoiced when on December 2, 1861, Direktor Philip Paulus joined the new church. What at first appeared to be a great asset to the church turned out very soon to be a great detriment. Paulus had been friendly to the denomination for a number of years and hoped to find opportunity in it to express more freely his message and purpose in the ministry, which was too evangelical for the State Church. He did not like the assignments to specific appointments. With Link he worked out a plan to appeal to the American church to establish a Mission Institute in Ludwigsburg. It was naturally assumed that a man of his preparation would be chosen to such a theological faculty. The General Conference of 1863, however, rejected the proposal and Paulus withdrew from the church to found a temporary movement called "The Society for the Spread of Living Christianity at Home." This, together with his journal *Die Friedensglocke* which Paulus had edited independently for some years, finally disappeared entirely. After living a while in Ludwigsburg without appointment, John Link finally assumed responsibility for the preaching in Baden.

Lorenz Eisenhardt was also received into the ministry about this time. Through the influence of Paulus he was received as a member of the church on February 2, 1863 and shortly afterward at a quarterly meeting in Plochingen was licensed as a minister. He later studied theology at Tübingen and proved a very valuable asset to the church. Such quarterly meetings had been planned at a gathering held just shortly before this time when it was also determined to divide the entire work into four districts and to conduct quarterly meetings on each district. At this same gathering the boundaries of each appointment were fixed and plans were laid for the publication of *Der Evangelische Botschafter* in Germany.

Since the work in Europe had grown to such proportions and since there was apparently some internal difficulty, the Board of Missions determined to send an American representative to inspect the work in Germany. Bishop W. W. Orwig was chosen but could not undertake the journey because of ill health and so Solomon Neitz assumed the commission. Neitz stayed in Germany forty days and preached widely to the delight of the people in and out of the church. He was less successful in healing the breach between Link and the church but was able to give the American church a better impression of the work in Europe than they had hitherto obtained.

On April 6, 1863, the second chapel in Europe was dedicated in Nordheim and the work prospered in that vicinity. This year also marked the first public celebration of the Holy Communion. Until this time this sacrament had been observed only in secret and in confidential circles because of the law of the province. Although this practice was opposed for a short time and in one instance, in Plochingen, the pastor was restrained by court order, revision of the provincial law soon made secret services of Holy Communion unnecessary.

Perhaps the most outstanding accomplishment of the year was the establishment in December, 1863, of *Der Evangelische Botschafter*, which since that date has been the official organ of the church in Europe. The leaders felt that the time had come when such a step had to be taken. And so without waiting for sanction from America, which they counted too great a delay, Wollpert was elected the first editor. The first issue of December, 1863, bore the motto "In essentials, unity, in non-essentials, liberty and in all things, love." This motto had been adopted by the Unitas Fratrum or Moravians some four centuries earlier and is a definite evidence of the influence upon the Evangelical Church by the Moravian and Pietistic elements in Germany.

The first Sunday School in Stuttgart was begun in 1863 and early in 1864 was organized and graded into classes so as to provide for the large number of persons who desired to enroll. While Dr. Philip



Schaff of New York was visiting in Stuttgart at a church Diet, he spoke of Sunday Schools and upon learning of the Evangelical School, visited it and praised the high type of work. Soon afterward this school became a model for others and even the State Churches established similar schools.

The work of the church was now becoming more and more complex with new organizations and preaching places, so that by 1864 it was determined to seek a more permanent form of organization.

Although Solomon Neitz reported unfavorably regarding the prospects of the work in Europe both to the Board of Missions and the General Conference of 1863, that general conference, unwilling to give up a work begun so auspiciously, voted that the work be brought formally into the body of the denomination through the establishment of an annual conference in Europe and also that Bishop J. J. Esher make an episcopal visit to Europe. No less an authority than Bishop Yeakel expressed the opinion in 1895 that if the authorities of the State Church had been more sympathetic and coöperative with the first Evangelical missionaries in their attempts to bring men to a true religious experience, it might never have been necessary to take this step of 1863, viz., to organize independently of the already existing church in Germany.<sup>11</sup> The Board of Missions, in the fall of 1864, appointed John Walz of the Ohio Conference as a new missionary to the church in Germany and he immediately assumed his position there and served most commendably for many years.

Bishop Esher arrived in Stuttgart December 22, 1864, and spent many weeks visiting almost every appointment in the new mission. Very early he discovered the necessity of settling the irregularities of John C. Link and on February 2nd brought the matter to a painful conclusion. Although denying insubordination, Link withdrew from the church and became quite bitter in his opposition to the work. In his later years he came to regret this step and before his death was reconciled with many of his former associates in the Evangelical Association.

February 24, 1865, marked the formal organization of the European mission as the Germany Conference of the Evangelical Association. Bishop Esher presided and J. P. Schnatz was chosen secretary with Lorenz Eisenhardt as his assistant. Complete statistics were not available but it was ascertained that there were eight Sunday Schools with 43 officers and teachers and 620 enrolled. The ministers Fuessle, Erdle, and Eisenhardt were ordained deacons and Albin H. Beck, Bernhard Beck, and F. Stuber were received as ministers on trial. This body also organized itself as a branch of the General Missionary Society with J. G. Wollpert as the first president; J. P. Schnatz, vice-president; Lorenz Eisenhardt, secretary; and John Walz, treasurer. At

<sup>11</sup> YH, (2), p. 276.

this first session the preachers were stationed as follows: Germany Conference District, John G. Wollpert, presiding elder and editor of *Der Evangelische Botschafter*; Stuttgart Circuit, John Walz; Plochingen Circuit, Matthias Erdle; Switzerland Mission, Gottlieb Fuessle; Stuber was given no appointment. The ministers attached their signatures of acquiescence and obedience to the minutes and the first annual session of the Germany Conference thus came to a close.

By March, 1865, presiding elder Wollpert had completed arrangements to begin the work of the church in Reutlingen, destined to become one of the most important centers of the denomination in Europe. By May of that year he and his family moved from Plochingen into their newly erected home and on June 25th Wollpert preached in the city for the first time. Jacob Schmidli proved a valuable assistant to Wollpert who naturally gave most of his time to the district as its presiding elder. Soon this circuit numbered twenty-two appointments which required that Wollpert's assistant had to preach 350 sermons during a thirteen month period.

During the year following the visit of Bishop Esher, the work in Europe prospered remarkably as though unusual inspiration had been brought upon the clergy and laity alike through the episcopal visit. As a matter of fact unity was once again established through the settlement of the case of John Link and all the workers took new hope and demonstrated new zeal. In many regions new preaching places became available more rapidly than the preachers were able to supply them so that the future of the work was definitely assured if only sufficient leaders could be supplied.

Since there was no bishop in Europe in 1866, Presiding Elder Wollpert was chosen to preside over the session of that year and Schnatz was named secretary. Jacob Kaechele of the Canada Conference and George Vetter of the Illinois Conference, sent by the Board of Missions, arrived at the annual session and were graciously received into the Germany Conference. The ministerial ranks were increased by five at this session for Jacob Schmidli, Frederick Bauer and John P. Luippold were granted licenses as preachers. The church membership had now increased to more than 3,000 and there were 123 preaching appointments. This body also sent a petition to the general conference requesting longer terms of service for preachers and asked that a bishop be sent to their next annual session by the Board of Missions.

During the two year interval between the second and third conference sessions, the church in Germany made rapid strides. New preaching appointments brought many new responsibilities for the very small number of ministers. It was discovered, especially in Württemberg and Switzerland, that it was possible to gather interested listeners to

worship in the out-of-doors on days when hundreds of people found their way on long treks through the countryside.

Bishop Esher arrived in Germany in time to open the third annual session in Reutlingen on June 11, 1868 and Christian Ott, the new missionary sent by the Board of Missions, made his first appearance among the ministers at this session. Five native ministers were also added to the ranks in the persons of Jacob Knapp, Gottlieb Gaehr, John G. Breusch, Christian Zbinden and John Marti, who were received as preachers on probation. In these two years more than fifty new preaching places were opened to the Evangelical Association, over 700 members were added to the church, and the Sunday School enrollment had almost doubled. Although John Wollpert had covered this entire area as presiding elder, it was determined that a new district should be formed. Jacob Kaechele was chosen the new presiding elder and was assigned to the Switzerland District. The work on the Switzerland mission had grown so rapidly that it was subdivided into three fields and the real beginning of the Swiss Conference of the Evangelical Church was at hand. Although John C. Link appeared before the conference, seeking restoration as a minister among them, it was felt that he had not manifested a proper spirit and so he was not received. This year also marked the death of Sebastian Kurz who was more responsible than anyone else for the establishment of the Evangelical Church in Germany. He died in Bonlanden, Württemberg, in his 79th year on November 8, 1868.

For the first time the annual conference session met in Switzerland in 1869 in the city of Thun. Seven new ministers were received and 650 names had been added to the church rolls during the year. After spending three successful years as a missionary in the European work George Vetter because of ill health was forced to return to America. At this session a branch of the Sunday School and Tract Union was formed and became a great aid to the work through publication of many pamphlets. In the fall of this year the large Ebenezer Chapel was erected in the important denominational center of Reutlingen, where, during the war with France in 1870, the denomination gained much good will by donating this fine new building for hospital purposes.

During the year 1870, Bishop Esher visited the European work again and found the church constantly growing. Almost a thousand members had been received during the year and a periodical for the Sunday Schools, *Der Evangelische Kinderfreund*, was published. At first it was a monthly organ. It became a semi-monthly publication in its second year, and soon afterward appeared as a weekly organ. Lorenz Eisenhardt was the first editor and was soon followed by Gottlieb Fuessle.

By 1871 the work in Europe had developed to such proportions that



it consumed a large amount of time and drew considerable attention at the general conference which met that year in Naperville, Illinois. Since most of the money for new church buildings, so sorely needed in many places in Germany, was to be found only in America it was decided that a collector should be appointed for this purpose. The Board of Missions chose J. P. Schnatz for this responsibility. This body also granted the European church the privilege of publishing books and literature without first obtaining approval for them from the American Board of Publications and also granted them permission to use the profits from their publications in Europe, with the understanding that they relinquish all claims to a share in the profits of the publications of the denomination in America. *Der Evangelische Botschafter* became a bi-weekly publication and Jacob Kaechele was named its new editor. The interest which the American church was showing in this mission project may well be seen by the fact that the general conference members contributed almost \$4,000 for the work in Germany and, by the time of the departure of the European representative to his home, this amount had been increased to \$7,000 by friends in the denomination.

In 1872 for the first time, the number of members newly received reached more than 1,000 and in 1873, 1,252. The Sunday School movement had also grown so that 5,340 were enrolled. The Evangelical preachers continuously widened their circles of influence and increased their preaching appointments. They were now serving in Saxony, Hesse, Thuringia, and, by 1874, in Prussia. In 1873 Bishop Esher was accompanied by George F. Spreng and Leonhardt Scheuermann from America who also attended the conference session and addressed the ministers. A very fine spirit of fellowship and coöperation was also manifested between the Evangelical leaders and the Methodists and Moravians whose representatives appeared at the 1873 session and greeted the conference. By 1874 the membership in Germany had increased to 5,925. There were 68 ministers and 222 Sunday Schools with almost 13,000 enrolled.

During this year a conference was held with the leaders of the Episcopal and Wesleyan Methodist Churches at Ludwigsburg, Württemberg, to discuss the question "Our Task Among the German People." This question was provoked by the many oppositions among the Germans themselves to the work of foreign Christian denominations. This conference decided,

"That we steadfastly believe that the Lord has called us to prosecute missionary labors among our German people, and we unitedly pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit to fully qualify us to fulfill our great mission."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p. 298.

Henceforth there was no longer any doubt in the minds of the leaders of the Evangelical Association or among the leaders of the other churches about the permanence of this work of the independent churches.

Although the French government had granted the Evangelical Church the privilege of free assembly, especially for the work in Strassburg in 1868, it was not until after the War of 1870 that the first annual session of the conference in Europe was held in Strassburg, Alsace, on June 15, 1871. This territory in Alsace and Lorraine has never been a very great stronghold of the denomination and has suffered some losses through its change of allegiance from France to Germany and back again to France during these years. During most of the last half century, the work of the Evangelical Church in France has been under the supervision of the Switzerland Conference and the deaconess work in France has been guided by the Deaconess Society in Switzerland.

Three institutions, the publishing houses, the Theological Seminary and the Deaconess Society, perhaps more than any others, have influenced the life of the Evangelical Association and have been responsible for the increase of influence through years of war and peace.

Although a number of the earlier books circulated among the Evangelicals in Europe were officially sanctioned by the church, they were privately published, as *e. g.*, the first song book, *Die Geistliche Viole*, in 1858. The Evangelical Press in Europe was founded in Nürtingen in 1872 and J. G. Wollpert and J. Walz were the first in charge. Six years later the Press was moved to Stuttgart where today the denomination owns and operates a modern printing and publishing plant under the supervision of Direktor G. Dick. In 1895 a branch publishing house was established in Bern, Switzerland. Several years later this became the publishing house of the Swiss Conference of which F. Gloor is the present publisher. Both these institutions have become the centers of editorial work and of publication for the denomination in their respective countries and the denominational headquarters as well.<sup>13</sup>

The Theological Seminary of the Evangelical Association in Europe was established by vote of the conference in Stuttgart on June 16, 1876. During the next summer it was opened on July 25, 1877 by Bishop Rudolph Dubs. At first this school was housed in the Ebenezer Chapel in Reutlingen but by 1904 the student body had increased in a single year from 15 to 20 students and it was felt absolutely necessary to erect a new building. By December the faculty and students were able to move into the splendid new building which had been constructed at a cost of more than \$50,000 on one of the highest points in the city of

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<sup>13</sup> Kücklich, Reinhold, *Die Evangelische Gemeinschaft in Europa, 1850-1925*, Stuttgart, 1925, p. 113f.

Reutlingen. To the present this Evangelical Seminary in Reutlingen is the only theological school of the church in Europe. Very few students from beyond Germany come to this seminary because of the stress between nations in Europe. The number of students for the ministry of the Evangelical Church in Germany has dropped appreciably just as in the seminaries supported by the German Reich.<sup>14</sup>

The third of the important institutions in the Evangelical Association in Europe is the Deaconess Society. This work was begun at the annual conference session in Essen in June, 1886, and the following August 12, 1886, the actual work was begun by one deaconess in a rented attic in Elberfeld. Since then the challenge of the church to full time service has called hundreds of young women to dedicate themselves as nurses or pastors' assistants. These women give their entire time to the church, dress very similarly to the deaconesses of the Lutheran and Protestant Episcopal Churches in this country, and upon retirement are cared for by the society.

The mother house in Wuppertal-Elberfeld owns and operates a magnificent large hospital and has established branch societies as well as hospitals and homes in the important cities of Berlin, Dortmund, Dresden, Erfurt, Essen, Frankfurt a M., Hamburg, Karlsruhe, Cologne, Munich, Solingen, Stuttgart, Ulm, Tabarz, Friedrichroda, and Wuppertal.<sup>15</sup> In a number of other cities and sometimes in the countryside convalescent or rest homes have been established, many of which are used by members and friends of the church for brief vacations as well.

By 1938 the ranks of the Deaconess Society in Germany alone had increased to include 647 women. The work of the hospitals may be estimated when it is observed that the record of 1937 indicates that these deaconesses served their patients 259,140 nursing days. While there has been a deaconess society in the Evangelical Church in America, the two cannot fairly be compared. In Europe the deaconesses literally give their lives and services to the church for a very modest living in the deaconess home while in America the Deaconess Society found it increasingly difficult to continue its work because of the cost of maintaining deaconesses.

In 1889 the mother house of the Deaconess Society opened a branch in Strassburg. This soon developed into an independent society and became the center of the deaconess work in France as Basel is in Switzerland. Splendid new hospitals have been erected in Basel and Strassburg. This society operating within the Swiss Conference has

<sup>14</sup> Schempp, Johannes, *Das Predigerseminar der Evangelischen Gemeinschaft zu Reutlingen*, Stuttgart, (1927) p. 28f.

<sup>15</sup> *Diakonissen-Anstalt Bethesda zu Elberfeld*, 1886-1926, Düsseldorf, 1926. Weischedel, Wilhelm, *Betraut mit dem Amt der Hände Jesu*, (Fünfzig Jahre Liebesarbeit der Diakonissenanstalt Bethesda Wuppertal-Elberfeld) 1886-1936, Stuttgart, 1936.



hospitals and homes in Basel, Zurich, Winterthur, and Bern, in Switzerland, and in Strasbourg and Mülhouse in France. In addition there are a number of rest or vacation homes in Arrau, Lenk and at Interlaken near the base of the incomparable Swiss peaks, Jungfrau, Mönch and Eiger in the Bernese Oberland.<sup>16</sup>

In the more recent years under the present régime in Germany, the Evangelical Association has come to be counted one of the Free Churches and as such participates in the Association of Free Churches of Germany composed of the Evangelical, Methodist and other similar bodies. Rev. E. Pieper, district superintendent of the Berlin District of the East Germany Conference, brought honor to his church when in 1937 he was named the chairman of the Association of Free Churches. By 1938 the Evangelical Association in Germany alone numbered over 25,000 members and in all of Europe the membership exceeded 32,000.<sup>17</sup>

The General Conference of 1922 provided for the Central Conference in Europe to establish an integration for all the work of the European Conferences in the closest possible relationship. In 1938 the general conference made additional provision for a Reich's Conference for the unification of all the work of the Evangelical Church in the annual conferences in Germany. The first Reich's Conference was held April 12-16, 1939, in Berlin.

## B. IN SWITZERLAND

Religious conditions in Switzerland were very similar to those in Germany during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The keen sense of responsibility which prompted evangelistic work among their brethren in Germany also sent the Evangelical preachers among the German speaking people of Switzerland. Missionary Gottlieb Gaehr described the great lack of religious interest among these people.

"The reason for this condition was chiefly to be found in the godlessness of the population, and the unbelief which had largely taken possession of the clergy of the State Church. Besides, the people on the mountains live scattered and isolated from the rest of mankind, very seldom get inside of a church and rarely hear anything religious. During the summer many of them are away in the Alps where they, in their unrestricted manner of life, deteriorate greatly. Resulting from such circumstances, religion becomes an object of aversion and its representatives are bitterly hated. He who can swear and blaspheme most that which is holy, becomes the hero of the day; hence also wicked feasts, drunken carousals, dances, wild music, etc., would succeed each other closely whereby everything godly is smothered."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Kücklich, R., *op. cit.*, p. 117f.

<sup>17</sup> *The Yearbook of the Evangelical Church*, 1939, p. 98.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted in *YH* (2), p. 305.

Into this environment Bishop J. J. Esher and the newly appointed Gottlieb Fuessle came, after the first annual conference in 1865, seeking to find an opening for the work of the church in a new country. John Nicolai had preached in Bern in 1852 without any permanent result. Just four years before in 1861 John Link had been instructed to begin the work in Switzerland but failed to respond to this challenge. The reception which the bishop and Fuessle received in Switzerland was none too cordial despite the fact that Bishop Esher carried papers from friends in America as introductions to friends and relatives in Switzerland. These men preached in the cantons of St. Gallen, Graubunden, Bern, Glarus, Schaffhausen and Zurich, the leading German centers of Switzerland, but nowhere were they well received save by a few individual families whose friends and relatives were members of the Evangelical Church in America. Finally after Bishop Esher's return to America, Fuessle also was compelled to leave Switzerland because he was a foreigner. The European conference circumvented this legal technicality by sending Jacob Schmidli, a native Swiss, to replace Fuessle. In 1866 Schmidli was returned and, in addition, Jacob Kaechele and Bernhard Beck came to assist him on the new mission.

Gradually the work in Switzerland began to concentrate in the vicinity of the important city of Bern and as late as 1867 Kaechele and Schmidli concentrated their efforts in this region which was to become the center of denominational life in the new land.

The early labors of the missionaries in Switzerland were not without severe hardships and reverses. In the first place it required physically stalwart men to travel the circuits of this mountainous country, the slopes of whose peaks became highways to be traversed to reach the remote residences of those who needed the gospel so much. Especially in winter time the storms and snow often imposed great physical hardship upon these courageous preachers. Then, too, the preachers of the State Church in Switzerland liked these new preachers no better than did their fellow ministers in the State Church of Germany. Time and again process of law prevented the conducting of services and occasionally brought fines upon the preachers. Again as in the neighboring Germany the crowds sometimes lost their restraint and allowed their opposition to the Evangelical preachers to take the form of physical violence. On one such occasion Schmidli was severely maltreated and almost lost his life. In addition he was arrested, taken into custody, and brought to trial only to have the satisfaction of seeing his opponents defeated and himself entirely exonerated. After this event in 1867 there was much less opposition to the work of the new church.

Gradually the Evangelical work began to spread into most of the sections of German Switzerland. A very popular type of service was the open-air meeting to which not only friends and members came, but

which brought many tourists and mountain residents into the church. One of the most effective of these services was conducted by Gottlieb Fuessle on the Wengern Alp, facing the beautiful Bernese Oberland with its majestic triple peaks in the near foreground, in 1867, when many were converted and brought into the church. J. Kaechele became the first presiding elder in 1868 when Switzerland was formed into a district. When George Vetter and Gottlieb Gahr were sent to Switzerland in 1868-1869 they extended the work particularly in the region of Thun on which circuit there were twenty-two semi-monthly preaching appointments during this year. A year later when J. M. Hurter was sent by the fourth conference to assist Schmidli on the Aargau mission they served twenty-seven such appointments. In a mountain area over fifty miles in length, in 1869-1870, Schmidli and Knapp served thirty-seven preaching appointments.

From 1872 to 1876 John Walz was the presiding elder of the Switzerland district and was able to unify the work and the spirit of the preachers so that the success of the comparatively new church was so marked as to attract the favorable attention of the leaders of many other churches. During these years there were two more tragic incidents in which two ministers almost lost their lives at the hands of ruffians but the courts returned verdicts against the assailants and imposed fines of \$50 and \$200, so that after this period the Evangelical ministers were almost entirely unmolested. By the year 1875 the church in Switzerland numbered almost 2,500 members and it was conceded by those not members of this church that the Evangelical Association was working with more success than any other denomination in the mountainous country.

One of the finest tributes to the work of these pioneer preachers is preserved by Reuben Yeakel who visited these cantons in 1879. A representative in the High Council at Bern, the supreme legislative body in the canton, stated in public session that since the Evangelical preachers were laboring in those parts a remarkable change had come upon the people, so that drinking, fighting, thieving, murder and crimes generally had lessened in such a degree that scarcely any one was now brought to the penitentiary, whereby a great amount of expense was saved to the state.<sup>19</sup>

By the close of another twenty years the membership in Switzerland came to exceed 4,800 and there were 40 ministers, 146 Sunday Schools and about 10,000 pupils enrolled. By 1938 the Swiss conference had 68 ministers and 127 congregations with 7,646 members, while the 189 Sunday Schools had an enrollment of over 12,000.

The important institutions in the Swiss conference, which was organized by the authority of the General Conference of 1875, are its spendid

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 326.



Deaconess Society, described in the previous section, and its excellent publishing institution in Bern where the literature for the Swiss and French congregations is printed and where in the recent years the independent weekly organs, previously printed in Stuttgart, are now edited and issued.

### C. IN FRANCE (ALSACE-LORRAINE)

As early as 1866 Jacob Schaeffe, of the Illinois Conference and a native of Alsace, visited relatives and friends in his homeland and tried to win them to the Christian way of life. Upon his return he became so enthused about establishing a mission of the church in Alsace that he ventured this suggestion in an article printed in *Der Christliche Botschafter*. There was much favorable reaction to the idea and by the close of the annual session of the conference in Germany in 1868 Bishop Esher appointed J. P. Schnatz as missionary to Strassburg. Very courageously, and slowly but successfully Schnatz undertook the difficult work of opening a mission in a city rather densely populated with German people but nevertheless on foreign soil.

In the beginning, Schnatz was forbidden to conduct public meetings because of the pressure brought by other groups upon the Prefect who had charge of granting all such privileges. Consequently Schnatz was content to invite small groups, never exceeding the legal number of nineteen, to his home where profitable religious services were conducted. Finally through the efforts of Theodore Kreuger, American Vice-Consul, Mr. Robinson, American Consul at Strassburg, and General Dix, the American Ambassador at Paris, the committee of the *Eglis Libre* of the Department of the Interior granted the Evangelical Association permission to conduct public services of worship.

Now Strassburg was in the very heart of that much contested area lying on the borders of France and Germany and which at short intervals has changed from French to German property and back again. Even today the inhabitants of this area are restless for it seems to be their common spirit to be dissatisfied with whatever power may happen to be ruling them. When they are in Germany they wish to belong to France and when a part of France many desire to return to the Reich. When hostilities broke out between France and Germany in 1870, Schnatz and his family were finally forced to withdraw while his assistant Schmidt remained to minister to the sixty members and the others of the 300 who usually attended their services.

After the hostilities ceased and Strassburg, long besieged, once more was on the way to return to normal conditions, Schnatz once again resumed his work, but found that it was necessary to begin his organization almost entirely anew. Then, in the spring of 1873, he was recalled to collect funds in America to make possible the erection of new church

buildings in Europe. Conrad Zwingli assumed the leadership in Strassburg and worked very effectively. Since Zwingli was a native Swiss the most friendly relations soon came to be established between this area and the Swiss people, which may account at least in part for the fact that the work in Alsace and Lorraine today is a part of the Swiss Conference. Strassburg also became the denominational center in this area, is the seat of the Deaconess Society in France and the location of one of the finest deaconess hospitals in all the Swiss Conference.

In Strassburg Conrad Zwingli was succeeded by Gottlieb Gaehr who had remarkable success in reestablishing the disrupted work of Schnatz. He and his assistant served twelve appointments which is indicative of the popularity of the Evangelical work there.

Jacob Kaechele and Jacob Schmidli visited in Colmar in Alsace on April 13, 1871, and determined that it was a desirable place for a new mission. The next annual session in June, 1871, was held in Strassburg and at this time Schmidli was appointed to begin the mission in Colmar. Soon other preaching appointments opened in these areas and while Alsace-Lorraine never became a major stronghold of the church in Europe it has developed through the years to be a very vital factor in the life of the Swiss Conference. Since 1940 this work has been supervised by the Evangelical Association in Germany.

It is very difficult for members of the denomination in America to realize all the implications of belonging to the same denomination, even the same annual conference, while residing in areas with different political allegiance. This problem becomes somewhat evident when it is remembered that there are numerous German-speaking inhabitants in Alsace and Lorraine (France) who until recently belonged to the Swiss Conference. Many look upon the triumphs of the friendly and brotherly spirit among the Evangelicals of all countries of Europe as a triumph of the spirit of Jesus Christ over all less important allegiances.

#### D. IN FARTHER EUROPE

Reinhold Kücklich in his excellent history of the Evangelical Association of Europe writes of the beginning of the work in these more remote areas:

"The Evangelical Association in her entire genius is supra-national. Therefore she feels bound at no borders and works on national oppositions in ways of reconciliation. This fundamental idea she has always followed and therefore she has been able to exist and work under different governments."<sup>20</sup>

In the year 1908, an invitation came from Russia requesting the leaders of the Evangelical Association to begin their very effective type

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<sup>20</sup> Kücklich, R., *op. cit.*, p. 72.

of religious work in the Baltic area. After careful consideration it was decided to open a mission in Riga which soon became the center of the work in this region. Although the work in this territory never became phenomenally large it was quite successful when the outbreak of the World War brought all work of this nature to an abrupt end. For two decades the mission in Riga operated under the government of Latvia. More recently this area was occupied by Russia but since 1941 it has been under the jurisdiction of Germany.

Those congregations formerly in the German provinces of Posen and West Prussia, more recently in Poland, have again been absorbed into Germany.

In Goldingen another small free church has united with the Evangelical Association and thus has strengthened the small mission work in numbers. The work of the denomination in these areas presents many serious problems because of the crucial political and social conditions and because of the difficulties in supporting the few pastors and missionaries with the very small incomes of the members and small grants from the Missionary Society.

## 99. THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN ASIA

### A. In Japan

Although the leaders of the Evangelical Association seriously considered the possibility of planting a Christian mission in some non-





Christian foreign land as early as 1850 it was to be another quarter of a century until that dream could be realized. Meanwhile funds were being collected so that when it was finally determined by the Board of Missions in 1874 that such a mission should be established, it remained only for the final action of the general conference the following year to make it an actuality. The sum of \$25,650 was ready for this important work.

Vivid descriptions by an eye-witness of that General Conference of 1875 in Philadelphia cause one to believe that the determination of that body to venture into the enterprise of a foreign missionary work was one of the most important decisions the leaders of the denomination ever made.

The following year Dr. and Mrs. Frederick Kreckler of Lebanon, Pennsylvania, Miss Rachel Hudson, a Pennsylvania teacher, and Rev. Adolph Halmhuber, of the Germany Conference, sailed on October 18th to begin the work of the denomination in the Orient. Dr. and Mrs. Kreckler and Miss Hudson opened a mission in Tokyo and Adolph Halmhuber began the work in Osaka. Dr. Kreckler, a very competent physician, soon won the hearts and confidence of the Japanese, but tragically was cut down after but a little more than five years of service among these people. In his ministration to the Japanese he contracted typhoid fever and died April 6, 1883. He lies buried in the Aoyama Cemetery in Tokyo.

Despite the personal differences among the missionaries in the early 1880's, the work of this mission developed so rapidly that it was organized into an annual conference on June 15, 1893, in the Kreckler Memorial Church in Tokyo.<sup>21</sup> At that time there were sixteen itinerant ministers in Japan and a total church membership of 568 and twenty-five Sunday Schools with 576 enrolled. By 1900 the Woman's Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association had grown to such proportions and had gathered sufficient funds to make possible the sending of their first missionaries to Japan in the persons of Miss Susan Bauernfeind and Miss Anna Kammerer.

The very best documentary record of the work of the Evangelical Association in Japan in the earlier years is the excellent volume, *Japan und die Christliche Mission*, by Rev. Adolph Halmhuber, in the first half of which he portrays a thorough and careful understanding of the land, its people and especially their religion and religious customs. In the latter half of the book he shows the beginning of Christian missions in Japan and in the last one hundred pages recounts the beginning of the Evangelical Mission in Japan. The superintendents of the Japan Mission have been the Revs. Jacob Hartz-

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<sup>21</sup> Umbreit, S. J., *Zwanzig Jahre Missionar in Japan*, Stuttgart, 1929, p. 105f.

ler, F. W. Voegelien, J. P. Hauch, S. J. Umbreit, and Paul S. Mayer, who is in charge at present.

With the turn to the present century the work in Japan came under the jurisdiction of Dr. S. J. Umbreit, later bishop of the denomination in Europe, and, since 1934, editor of *Der Christliche Botschafter*. Dr. Umbreit has written the most complete story of the development of the Japan mission in which, like Rev. A. Halmhuber, he shows a very clear and sympathetic understanding of the Japanese and also has permanently recorded the achievements of his denomination with accuracy and fine perspective. This volume was printed by the Evangelical Press in Stuttgart in 1929 during his episcopal service in Germany and is entitled *Zwanzig Jahre Missionar in Japan*.

It is very significant that both Dr. Umbreit and Rev. Halmhuber sensed very clearly the necessity for making the missionary work in Japan a work of the Japanese for the Japanese. While later modern studies have come to stress the necessity of making foreign missionary work a native enterprise with proper guidance by sponsoring denominations, these far-sighted leaders saw this need more than fifty years ago.<sup>22</sup>

It was very early, too, in the Japanese missionary work of the denomination that the leaders of the church sensed the necessity of coöperating with the other Christian denominations working in the same country. Halmhuber describes these union efforts, showing that as early as 1880 the missionaries of the Christian denominations conducted union prayer meetings in Yokohama, Tokyo and Osaka. Union Conferences were held October 12-13, 1881, and the Universal Missionary Conference was held in Osaka April 16-21, 1883.<sup>23</sup> Through such friendly association with the leaders of other churches, the Evangelical Church has come to coöperate in an organized way today so that her missionaries participate in the work of the Deaf-Oral School and also in the union theological seminary, Aoyama Gakuin in Tokyo, where Dr. Paul S. Mayer of the Evangelical Church is a member of the faculty.

In addition to these coöperative efforts the Evangelical Church conducts Sunday Schools, Young People's Societies, Bible classes, English night schools, kindergartens, a kindergarten training school, work among factory girls, the Mukojima nursery, a needy girls' home (Aisenryo), work among boatmen and the Tokyo Bible School. The Tokyo Bible School had an enrollment of forty-nine students in 1938, twenty of whom were in the regular theological department. The kindergarten work is an exceedingly important branch of the Evangelical

<sup>22</sup> Halmhuber, Adolph, *Japan und die Christliche Mission*, Cleveland, 1884, p. 285, and Umbreit, S. J., *op. cit.*, p. 288ff.

<sup>23</sup> Halmhuber, Adolph, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-6.

mission work for it reaches not only the very small and impressionable children but many of their mothers as well. In 1938 the twenty-one kindergartens reported an enrollment of 890 children who were cared for by forty-three teachers. In addition to these children 697 mothers have been attending these meetings and have also been taught the Christian message.

Since 1926 Dr. Paul S. Mayer has been the superintendent of the Evangelical work in Japan and has given to this mission a splendid constructive leadership. The Japan Conference now has thirty-five ministers and a membership of 2,637. The forty-nine Sunday Schools have an enrollment of 3,260 and 435 young people are members of the Christian Endeavor Societies.

Just before the outbreak of the war with Japan late in 1941, the Christian churches in Japan were affiliated in the Church of Christ in Japan under national government supervision.

### B. In China

The first step toward establishing a mission of the Evangelical Church in China was made in 1898 when the Board of Missions of the Evangelical Association requested the Rev. F. W. Voegelien, then superintendent of the Japan mission, to visit China with a view to ascertaining the possibility of beginning a mission work there and if





possible to find a favorable location for such a work. Superintendent Voegelein chose the province of Hunan, then one of the most religiously neglected and also exclusively native areas of all China. Even though he made a most stirring appeal to the next general conference in St. Paul, Minnesota, the following fall, that conference decided that the church was not yet ready to make this second venture in the Orient.

In 1900 the Board of Missions of the United Evangelical Church decided to open a mission field in China and chose the province of Hunan for their undertaking. Dr. and Mrs. C. Newton Dubs were appointed as missionaries in January of this year, but because of the Boxer Uprising were delayed in sailing so that they did not arrive in Shanghai until December 19, 1900. So, then, the son of former Bishop R. Dubs became the first missionary and founder of the present mission work of the Evangelical Church in China.

The opening of the Evangelical work in China was probably marked by more hindrances and difficulties than in any other region in which the church has been established through the almost one hundred and fifty years of its history. In the first months it was very difficult to secure any property or even a place in which to live. Finally Doctor Dubs succeeded in establishing himself in Changsha, a city of about 300,000 population and the capital of the province of Hunan. Great was the rejoicing when in June, 1902, the first chapel of the Evangelical Church in China was opened for services in this city.

Just four years after the challenge of Superintendent Voegelein had been temporarily rejected, the General Conference of the Evangelical Association in session in Kitchener, Ontario, in October, 1903, finally resolved to open a mission in China. They followed the suggestion of their far-sighted leader in the Orient and also began a work in the province of Hunan. In that very same month and year, October, 1903, the first Evangelical Church was organized by Doctor Dubs in Changsha with five charter members and for the first time the sacrament of the Holy Communion was celebrated by an Evangelical group in China.

In 1904 the Evangelical Association sent to China as its first missionary representatives the Revs. Clarence E. Ranck, of Naperville, Illinois, A. Butzbach, of Michigan, and Ernest Kelhöfer, of Wisconsin. A year later Bishop S. C. Breyfogel made the first episcopal visit to China. Very early these leaders came to sense the close relation between the healing and evangelistic ministries which their church could offer. Consequently Frederick C. Krumling, M.D., of Blissfield, Michigan, was sent to China in 1906, and, with his wife, settled in Shenchowfu. Two years later new branches for the work of the church were established in Yuh sien and Chaling. The first hospital was established at Tungjen, in the Province of Kweichow, in 1909. The United Evan-

gelical Church also sent a medical missionary, Dr. B. E. Niebel, son of the Rev. B. H. Niebel, long a missionary secretary and leader in that church, who with his wife settled in Liling and three years later in 1917 erected and opened a hospital in that city.

A little more than twenty years ago there were over 600 Chinese who had become members of the Evangelical Church. Perhaps in no other country in the world have the political and social conditions been so unstable as in China since the World War. While the work of the Evangelical missionaries has progressed remarkably in East and West Hunan particularly, even in this remote area there have been constant disturbances due to political changes, civil and foreign wars, famines, and communistic and anti-Christian movements. The high peak of mission representatives in China was reached in 1926 when sixty-six persons represented the staff of missionaries of the Evangelical Church in this vast country. Widespread revolution the very next year demanded the recall of a number of these persons and never since then has the staff come to be as large again.

The work of the Evangelical Church in China was organized into an annual Conference in 1937 under the chairmanship of Bishop C. H. Stauffacher. General Secretary W. L. Bollman was also present. By 1938 this conference reported 2,142 members of the church with twenty-six ministers caring for thirty-five congregations. The Rev. C. C. Talbott, D.D., is the present superintendent of the mission work of the denomination in China. This mission field of the Evangelical Church covers an area of 10,500 square miles in which, with slight exceptions, the Evangelical missionaries are the only Christian workers to the population of more than 2,500,000 persons.

Although constantly in personal danger and frequently forced to move from one zone to another, the missionaries of the Evangelical church have carried on their work heroically through the war with Japan.

## 100. THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN AFRICA

A growing mission of the denomination and certainly the most primitive one is the comparatively new venture in Nigeria, Africa. As early as 1906, the Board of Home and Foreign Missions of the United Evangelical Church affiliated with the Sudan United Mission with headquarters in London, England, and branches in other countries, by sending the Rev. and Mrs. C. W. Guinter, of the Central Pennsylvania Conference, to do mission work in the Wukari region and later among the Wurkum tribe. The Wurkum district lies in the eastern portion of the northern province of Nigeria, in British West Africa. It lies about 700 miles from the coast and is accessible only by long difficult journey by rail and river.

By 1926 the success of this work so captivated the missionary leaders of the denomination that the Board of Missions decided to assume full responsibility and control of this work in Wurkum land. Although Rev. and Mrs. Guinter found it necessary to return to America because of poor health, the staff has increased to six ministers and their families and new stations have been established at Bambur in 1923, at Kerum in 1925, and in the Pero country in 1929. As recently as 1936, permission was received from the British government to occupy a strategic center known as Bambuka.

One of the most difficult aspects of the work in this interior region of Africa is the fact that even very close neighboring tribes quite frequently speak different dialects. Very early in his work Rev. Guinter found it necessary to reduce some of these tribal languages to a written form for the first time. Since then a similar work has been done by other missionaries for neighboring regions. Rev. C. W. Guinter, Rev. A. J. Faust, Mrs. Victor Walter and others of these missionaries have translated portions of the Bible into these native tongues and have had them printed for distribution among the natives.

While the actual native membership of the Evangelical Church at present is less than one hundred, the prospects are very bright for growth and development and it must be said that the influence and good will of the missionaries far exceeds that which might be indicated by so modest a membership. The present superintendent of the African missions of the Evangelical Church is the Rev. Ira E. McBride.

## EPILOGUE

Little did Jacob Albright realize when he gave one of his last exhortations to those who had gathered at a quarterly meeting that the work the denomination, whose foundations he had so substantially laid in the last twelve years of his life, would be extended to the very ends of the earth in the next century and a half. Perhaps more valuable than any other words which he ever wrote or spoke—then prophetic indeed and now a very fitting ideal for his disciples, the clergy and laity of the Evangelical Church—were his words to those intimate friends in that sacred hour:

"In all that you do, or think of doing, let your object be to enhance God's glory, and advance the work of his grace in your own hearts, as well as among your brethren and sisters; and be diligent co-workers in the way which God has pointed out to you, to which he will grant you his blessing."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *YA*, p. 114.



## APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX A

### IMPORTANT DATES IN THE HISTORY OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

- 1732—Johannes Albrecht and family landed in Philadelphia, September 19th.
- 1758—Jacob Albright was born near Pottstown, Pennsylvania, May 1st.
- 1792—Conversion of Jacob Albright.
- 1796—Jacob Albright began his first preaching tour.
- 1800—The first classes were organized and the denomination begun.
- 1803—The first conference session held near Quakertown, Pennsylvania.
- 1807—Important conference held at Kleinfeltersville, Pennsylvania.
- 1809—The first *Discipline* and the first *Catechism* were printed.
- 1810—First Evangelical and first German camp meeting in America.
- 1814—John Dreisbach was elected the first Presiding Elder.
- 1816—The first general conference held in Union County, Pennsylvania.
- 1817—The first church building and the first printing plant were established at New Berlin, Pennsylvania.
- 1832—The first Sunday School was founded at Lebanon, Pennsylvania.  
—The first English *Discipline* was printed.
- 1836—First issue of *Der Christliche Botschafter*.
- 1837—First Evangelical and first German Sunday School in Canada.
- 1838—First missionary society organized.
- 1847—Presiding Elder District organized in Canada.
- 1848—First issue of *The Evangelical-Messenger*.
- 1850—Jubilee year; Jacob Albright Memorial Church built at Kleinfeltersville, Pennsylvania; first foreign mission begun in Germany.
- 1856—Union Seminary begun in New Berlin, Pennsylvania.
- 1860—Death of Bishop John Seybert.
- 1861—North Central College begun at Plainfield, Illinois.
- 1863—*Der Evangelische Botschafter* founded in December in Germany.
- 1865—First mission to Switzerland.
- 1868—First mission to France.
- 1873—Union Biblical Institute founded at Naperville, Illinois.
- 1875—First mission in the Orient opened in Japan.
- 1877—Theological Seminary established in Germany.
- 1880—First Young People's Society organized in Dayton, Ohio.
- 1883—Death of Dr. Frederick Kreckler in Japan.
- 1886—Deaconess Society organized in Germany.
- 1890—Young People's Alliance organized.

- 1891—Keystone League of Christian Endeavor organized. Division of the church.
- 1900—C. Newton Dubs established the first mission of the church in China; Western Union College founded.
- 1894—Organization of the United Evangelical Church.
- 1905—Evangelical School of Theology founded in Reading, Pennsylvania.
- 1908—Mission begun in Riga.
- 1911—First church building in Italian mission work erected in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- 1921—Mission begun in the mountains of Kentucky.
- 1922—The Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church merged to become The Evangelical Church.
- 1926—The denomination assumed full charge of the previously established mission in Nigeria, Africa.
- 1938—The Evangelical Church became the first to officially join the World Council of Churches.



## APPENDIX B

### THE GENERAL OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

#### A. BISHOPS

<i>Name</i>	<i>Years in the</i>		<i>Deacon</i>	<i>Elder</i>	<i>Died</i>
	<i>Episcopacy</i>	<i>Licensed</i>			
	Nov.	May 18,			
Jacob Albright .....	1807-1808	....	....	1803	1808
John Seybert .....	1839-1860	1821	1822	1824	1860
Joseph Long .....	1843-1869	1822	1824	1826	1869
William W. Orwig ...	1859-1863	1828	1830	1832	1889
John Jacob Esher .....	1863-1901	1845	1847	1849	1901
Reuben Yeakel .....	1871-1879	1853	1855	1857	1904
Rudolph Dubs .....	1875-1890	1856	1858	1860	1915
Thomas Bowman .....	1875-1915	1859	1861	1863	1923
S. C. Breyfogel .....	1891-1930*	1873	1875	1877	1934
William Horn .....	1891-1915	1861	1864	1866	1917
Samuel P. Spreng ....	1907-1930*	1876	1878	1880	....
G. Heinmiller .....	1915-1922	1874	1876	1878	1922
Lawrence H. Seager ..	1915-1934*	1888	1890	1893	1937
Matthew T. Maze ....	1922-1934*	1888	1890	1892	1940
John F. Dunlap .....	1922-1934	1888	1891	1893	1941
John S. Stamm .....	1926-....	1900	1902	1905	....
Samuel J. Umbreit ....	1926-1934	1895	1899	1901	....
George E. Epp .....	1930-....	1905	1907	1909	....
Elmer W. Praetorius ..	1934-....	1905	1908	1910	....
Charles H. Stauffacher.	1934-....	1901	1903	1905	....

\* These bishops were elected bishops emeritus.

#### THE UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH 1894-1922 \*

Rudolph Dubs .....	1894-1902
Wesley M. Stanford .....	1894-1902
H. B. Hartzler .....	1902-1910
William F. Heil .....	1902-1910
W. H. Fouke .....	1910-1918
U. F. Swengel .....	1910-1918
W. F. Heil .....	1918-1922
M. T. Maze .....	1918-1922

\* From 1891 to 1894, Rudolph Dubs, C. S. Haman and Wesley M. Stanford served as bishops, having been elected by the group which afterward became the United Evangelical Church in 1894.

## B. PUBLISHERS, EDITORS AND GENERAL SECRETARIES OF THE SOCIETIES OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

### 1. Publishers

- 1816-1820—Solomon Miller and Henry Niebel.  
 1820-1827—John Dreisbach.  
 1827-1835—No publishing house; George Miller did all the printing on his private press.  
 1836-1839—W. W. Orwig.  
 1839-1843—C. Hammer.  
 1843-1847—J. C. Reisner.  
 1847-1851—H. Fisher.  
 1851-1855—W. W. Orwig.  
 1855-1867—C. Hammer.  
 1867-1869—W. W. Orwig.  
 1869-1879—William Schneider.  
 1879-1887—M. Lauer and William Yost.  
 1887-1893—M. Lauer and H. Mattill.  
 1893-1901—C. A. Thomas and H. Mattill.  
 1901-1903—H. Mattill and J. H. Lamb.  
 1903-1909—J. H. Lamb and C. Hauser.  
 1909-1922—C. Hauser.  
 1922-1930—C. Hauser and Roy H. Stetler.  
 1930- . . . —Roy H. Stetler.

### PUBLISHERS IN THE UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH

- 1898-1910—S. L. Wiest.  
 1910-1922—J. J. Nungesser.

### PUBLISHERS IN EUROPE

#### *Stuttgart, Germany*

Johannes Walz  
 Albin Hermann Beck  
 Reinhold Kücklich  
 George Dick

#### *Bern, Switzerland*

- 1903-1911—Theodore Pfrimmer.  
 1912-1936—P. F. Schär.  
 1936- . . . —F. Gloor.

### 2. Editors of the Periodicals of the Evangelical Church in America

#### (1) *Der Christliche Botschafter*

- 1836-1836—Adam Ettinger.  
 1836-1843—W. W. Orwig.

1843-1847—Adam Ettinger.  
 1847-1850—Nicholas Gehr.  
 1850-1855—W. W. Orwig.  
 1855-1863—C. G. Koch.  
 1863-1867—W. W. Orwig.  
 1867-1875—Rudolph Dubs.  
 1875-1879—M. Lauer.  
 1879-1891—W. Horn.  
 1891-1915—G. Heinmiller.  
 1915-1934—T. C. Meckel.  
 1934-....—S. J. Umbreit.

(2) *The Evangelical-Messenger*

1848-1850—Nicholas Gehr.  
 1850-1855—Henry Fisher.  
 1855-1859—John Dreisbach.  
 1859-1870—T. G. Clewell.  
 1870-1871—Reuben Yeakel.  
 1871-1879—Jacob Hartzler.  
 1879-1887—H. B. Hartzler.  
 1887-1907—S. P. Spreng.  
 1907-1919—W. H. Bucks.  
 1919-....—E. G. Frye.  
 1922-1929—A. E. Hangen (Associate Editor).  
 1930-1934—C. A. Mock (Associate Editor).

(3) *The Evangelical Crusader*

(*The Young People* to 1907—*The Evangelical Herald* to 1922—*The Evangelical Endeavor* to 1927.)

1903-1911—L. H. Seager.  
 1911-1919—H. A. Kramer.  
 1919-1927—W. C. Hallwachs.  
 ad interim—E. W. Praetorius (eight months).  
 1927-....—R. M. Veh.

(4) *The English Sunday School Literature and The Living Epistle*

1863-1871—Reuben Yeakel.  
 1871-1875—J. Young.  
 1875-1883—H. J. Bowman.  
 1883-1887—P. W. Raidabaugh.  
 1887-1899—J. C. Hornberger.  
 1899-1901—J. H. Lamb.  
 1901-1911—L. H. Seager.  
 1911-1919—H. A. Kramer (*Living Epistle* discontinued in 1919).  
 1919-1922—W. C. Hallwachs.



1922-. . .—W. E. Peffley.

1922-. . .—G. L. Schaller, Associate Editor.

(5) *Das Evangelische Magazin* and the German Sunday School Literature

1869-1871—J. J. Esher.

1871-1879—W. Horn.

1879-1893—C. A. Thomas.

1893-1895—W. Horn.

1895-1903—C. F. Zimmermann.

1903-1926\*—Christian Staebler.

1926-1930—J. E. Klein.

1930-1934—T. C. Meckel.

1934-. . .—S. J. Umbreit.

(6) *The Evangelical* of the United Evangelical Church

1891-1894—William Caton.

1894-1895—J. M. Ettinger.

1895 (Apr.-July)—B. J. Smoyer.

1895-1902—H. B. Hartzler.

1902-1918—W. M. Stanford.

1918-1920—H. B. Hartzler.

1920-1922—A. E. Hangen.

1918-1922—W. H. Fouke, Associate Editor.

(7) *Die Evangelische Zeitschrift*

1891-1902—C. N. Dubs.

1902-1915—R. Dubs.

1915-1918—Christian Ott.

(8) *The K. L. C. E. Journal*

1896-1898—U. F. Swengel and W. H. Fouke.

1898-1910—W. H. Fouke.

1910-1912—D. A. Poling.

1912-1914—W. E. Peffley.

1914-1922—W. M. Stanford.

1914-1915—L. C. Hunt, Associate Editor.

1915-1922—W. E. Peffley, Associate Editor.

(9) The Sunday School Literature of the United Evangelical Church

1894-1898—U. F. Swengel.

1898-1902—J. D. Woodring.

1902-1910—W. H. Fouke.

1910-1922—W. M. Stanford.

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\* At the close of 1926 *Das Evangelische Magazin* was united with *Der Christliche Botschafter*.

1914-1915—L. C. Hunt, Associate Editor.

1915-1922—W. E. Peffley, Associate Editor.

### 3. Editors of the Periodicals of the Evangelical Church in Germany

#### (1) *Der Evangelische Botschafter*

1864-1872—J. G. Wollpert.

1872-1876—J. Kächele.

1876-1888—G. Füssle.

1888-1888—J. B. Breusch.

1888-1889—G. Heinmiller.

1889-1915—G. Füssle.

1916-1920—R. Kücklich.

1920-1936—M. Richter.

1936- . . . —H. Pfäfflin.

#### (2) *Der Evangelische Kinderfreund*

1870-1872—L. Eisenhardt.

1872-1888—G. Füssle.

1888-1888—J. B. Breusch.

1888-1889—G. Heinmiller.

1889-1915—G. Füssle.

1916-1920—R. Kücklich.

1920-1936—M. Richter.

1936- . . . —H. Pfäfflin.

#### (3) *Der Evangelische Missionsfreund*

1878-1890—J. G. Wollpert.

1891-1895—C. Bader.

1896-1915—G. Füssle.

1916-1920—R. Kücklich.

1920-1933—M. Richter.

(Discontinued after 1933)

#### (4) *Der Evangelische Sonntagsschulfreund*

1885-1886—G. Füssle.

1887-1891—G. Heinmiller.

1892-1894—J. Klenert.

1894-1895—S. F. Maurer.

1896-1915—G. Füssle.

1916-1920—R. Kücklich.

1920-1923—M. Richter.

(Omitted publication in 1924)

1925-1936—M. Richter.

1936- . . . —H. Pfäfflin.

(5) *Die Gute Botschaft*

- 1888-1895—B. Beck.  
 1896-1915—G. Füssle.  
 1916-1920—R. Kücklich.  
 1920-1935—M. Richter.  
 1936- . . . —G. Dick.

(6) *Der Christliche Bundesbote*

- 1890-1891—G. Heinmiller.  
 1892-1895—J. B. Breusch.  
 1896-1915—G. Füssle.  
 1916-1920—R. Kücklich.  
 1920-1933—M. Richter.  
 (After 1933, became *Jugendbote der Evangelischen Gemeinschaft*)  
 1934-1936—M. Richter.  
 1936- . . . —H. Pfäfflin.

(7) *Evangelische Bausteine*

- 1892-1894—S. F. Maurer and J. Schempp.  
 1895-1896—J. Schempp and S. F. Maurer.  
 1897-1907—C. Bader.  
 1908-1920—R. Kücklich.  
 1921-1923—M. Richter.  
 1924-1925—Omitted publication.  
 1926-1929—J. Gegenheimer and Dr. R. Kücklich.  
 1930- . . . —Dr. R. Kücklich.

(8) *Missionstaube für Christenkinder*

- 1896-1899—G. Füssle.  
 (Discontinued after 1899)

(9) *Quellwasser*

- 1920-1931—L. Maier and E. Pieper.  
 1932-1933—E. Pieper and A. Schmid.  
 1934- . . . —K. Goebel and A. Schmid.

## 4. Editors of the Periodicals of the Evangelical Church in Switzerland

*Der Evangelische Botschafter*

- 1917-1922—S. F. Maurer.  
 1923-1929—F. Schweingruber.  
 1930-1939—E. Jost.  
 1940- . . . —S. Schaffner.

*Der Evangelische Kinderfreund*

- 1917- . . . —J. Geissbühler.



*Die Gute Botschaft*

1935-1937—J. Friedli.

1938-....—A. Schär.

*Der Evangelische Missionsfreund*

1934-1936—E. Reimann.

1937-....—E. Marti.

*Der Evangelische Sonntagsschulfreund*

1924-1927—J. Müller.

1928-1929—F. Schweingruber.

1929-1930—E. Schweingruber.

1930-1932—P. Jaggi.

1933-1939—(from Stuttgart)

1940-....—D. Roser.

*Der Jugendfreund* since 1934 *Der Kreuzfahrer*

1919-1929—K. Schweingruber.

1930-1938—K. Lämmlin.

1939-....—P. Jaggi.

*Der Christliche Hausfreund* (Swiss Conference Calendar)

1900-1924—S. F. Maurer.

1925-1931—G. A. Singer.

1932-1934—E. Jost.

1935-....—W. Hottinger.

## 5. General Secretaries

## (1) The Missionary Society

1859-1863—Reuben Yeakel.

1863-1875—William Yost.

1875-1879—J. Young; William Yost, Treasurer.

1879-1883—S. L. Wiest.

1883-1887—S. Heiningen; S. L. Wiest, Treasurer.

1887-1891—S. Heiningen; William Yost, Treasurer.

1891-1895—\*T. C. Meckel; William Yost, Treasurer.

1895-1907—T. C. Meckel; William Yost, Treasurer.

1907-1911—T. C. Meckel.

1911-1915—T. C. Meckel; George Johnson, Treasurer.

1915-1919—George Johnson.

1919-1922—George Johnson; B. R. Wiener, Field Secretary.

1922-1930—G. E. Epp and B. H. Niebel; B. R. Wiener, Field Secretary to 1926.

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\* At the General Conference of 1891, W. H. Bucks was elected but resigned one month later.

1930-1934—W. L. Bollman; C. H. Stauffacher, Field Secretary.

1934-....—W. L. Bollman; Carl Heinmiller, Field Secretary.

(2) Christian Education

1907-1919—F. C. Berger.

1919-1934—E. W. Praetorius.

1934-1941—J. A. Heck.

1941-....—R. H. Mueller.

(3) Superannuation Fund

1911-1934—S. C. Breyfogel.

1934-1938—J. R. Niergarth.

1938-....—A. H. Doescher.

(4) Church Extension

1922-1930—H. F. Schlegel.

1930-1934—W. B. Cox.

1934-....—Carl Heinmiller.

**General Secretaries of the United Evangelical Church**

(1) Missionary Society

1906-1922—B. H. Niebel.

1921-1922—C. H. Stauffacher, Associate Secretary.

(2) Sunday Schools and Keystone League of Christian Endeavor

1910-1912—Daniel A. Poling.

1912-1922—W. E. Peffley.

## APPENDIX C

### THE ANNUAL CONFERENCES

<i>Number</i>	<i>Organized</i>	
	1800	—First classes organized.
	1803	—First conference held.
	1806	—Second conference held.
	1807	—First regular Annual Conference held.
	1807-26	—The entire church in one conference.
	1827-39	—The old conference divided into Eastern and Western Conferences with the Western Conference subsidiary to, almost a part of the Eastern Conference until 1835 and financially so until 1839.
1-3	1839	—East Pennsylvania, West Pennsylvania and Ohio. West Pennsylvania became Central Pennsylvania in 1859.
4	1844	—Illinois.
5	1849	—New York.
6	1852	—Pittsburgh.
7	1852	—Indiana.
8	1856	—Wisconsin.
9	1860	—Iowa.
10-12	1864	—Canada, Michigan, and Kansas.
13	1865	—Germany.
14	1868	—Minnesota.
15-19	1875	—Atlantic, Erie, Des Moines (from Iowa), Pacific and Southern Indiana.
20	1879	—Switzerland.
21	1879	—Nebraska.
22	1881	—Platte River.
23-24	1884	—Pacific Conference divided into Oregon and California Conferences, Dakota.
25	1887	—Texas.
24	1893	—Southern Indiana Conference was reincorporated with the Indiana Conference.
25	1893	—Japan.
26-27	1896	—Washington and New England.
28	1900	—Germany Conference divided into North and South Germany Conferences.
27	1912	—Platte River Conference annexed to the Nebraska Conference.



*Number Organized*

28-29	1920	—Colorado. Dakota divided into North Dakota and South Dakota Conferences.
30	1922*	—East Pennsylvania United, Illinois United; Erie Conference divided among the Ohio, Pittsburgh and New York Conferences.
30	1927	—Illinois United merged with Illinois, Des Moines and Iowa merged, Montana and Northwest Canada Conferences newly formed.
29	1929	—East Pennsylvania United merged with East Pennsylvania.
30	1930	—North Germany Conference divided into East Germany and West Germany Conferences.
29	1935	—Washington and Oregon Conferences merged.
30	1937	—China.

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\* At the time of the merging of the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church to become The Evangelical Church in 1922 it was authorized that the Kansas and Kansas United Conferences should be united, that the Oregon and Oregon United Conferences should be united, that the Nebraska and Platte River Conferences should be united, that the Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh United Conferences should be united, that the Ohio and Ohio United Conferences should be united, that the Northwest Conference appointments should be distributed to the Des Moines and Iowa Conferences. All of these actions were carried out soon afterward so that in 1922 no new conferences were formed save that the East Pennsylvania and the Illinois Conferences of the United Evangelical Church became the East Pennsylvania United and the Illinois United Conferences of the Evangelical Church.

## APPENDIX D

### GENERAL CONFERENCES OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1816—October 14-17             | Home of Martin Dreisbach, Buffalo Valley, Union County, Pennsylvania. John Dreisbach, president; Henry Niebel, secretary.   |
| 1820—June 5-9                  | New Berlin, Pennsylvania. John Dreisbach, president; Henry Niebel, secretary.   |
| 1826—June 5                    | New Berlin, Pennsylvania. John Seybert, president; J. C. Reisner, secretary.  |
| 1827—June 4                    | Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania. James Barber, president; J. Conrad Reisner, secretary. (Some assert that this was not a General Conference but the official minutes clearly state that it was.) |
| 1830—November 1                | Home of John Adam Hennig, Penn's Valley, Hains Township, Centre County, Pennsylvania. Joseph Long, president; John Seybert, secretary.  |
| 1835—May 25                    | Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania. Henry Niebel, president; J. G. Zinser, secretary.   |
| 1836—November 14               | Home of John Ferner, Somerset Township, Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Henry Niebel, president; Charles Hammer, secretary.  |
| 1839—March 25                  | Mosser's Church, Hains Township, Centre County, near Millheim, Pennsylvania. Thomas Buck, president; Bishop, John Seybert; George Brickley, secretary.                                    |
| 1843—October 23-<br>November 4 | Greensburg, Summit County, Ohio. (First delegated Conference) Bishops, John Seybert and Joseph Long; A. M. Schaeffer, secretary.  |
| 1847—September 29              | New Berlin, Pennsylvania. Bishops, John Seybert and Joseph Long; W. W. Orwig, secretary.  |
| 1851—September 17-30           | Flat Rock, Ohio. Bishops, John Seybert and Joseph Long; Henry Bucks, secretary.   |

- 1855—September 19 Lebanon, Pennsylvania. Bishops, John Seybert and Joseph Long; J. J. Esher, secretary.
- 1859—October 5-18 Naperville, Illinois. Bishops, John Seybert, Joseph Long, and W. W. Orwig; C. G. Koch, secretary.
- 1863—October 1-20 Buffalo, New York. Bishops, Joseph Long and J. J. Esher; Jesse Yeakel, secretary.
- 1867—October 10-28 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Bishops, Joseph Long and J. J. Esher; Reuben Yeakel, secretary.
- 1871—October 12-27 Naperville, Illinois. Bishops, J. J. Esher and Reuben Yeakel; Jesse Yeakel, secretary.
- 1875—October 14-  
November 4 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Bishops, J. J. Esher, Reuben Yeakel, Rudolph Dubs and Thomas Bowman; Jesse Yeakel, secretary.
- 1879—October 2-20 Noble Street Church, Chicago, Illinois. Bishops, J. J. Esher, Rudolph Dubs and Thomas Bowman; C. A. Thomas, secretary.
- 1883—October 4-25 Linden Street Church, Allentown, Pennsylvania. Bishops, J. J. Esher, Rudolph Dubs and Thomas Bowman; William Horn, secretary.
- 1887—September 1-27 Buffalo, New York. Bishops, J. J. Esher, Rudolph Dubs and Thomas Bowman; William Horn, secretary.
- 1891—October 1-21 Indianapolis, Indiana. Bishops, J. J. Esher, Thomas Bowman, S. C. Breyfogel and William Horn; William Horn and G. Heinmiller, secretaries. Heinmiller became secretary after Horn's election as bishop.
- 1895—October 3-18 Elgin, Illinois. Bishops, J. J. Esher, Thomas Bowman, S. C. Breyfogel and William Horn; G. Heinmiller and S. P. Spreng, secretaries.
- 1899—October 5-23 Emanuel Church, St. Paul, Minnesota. Bishops, J. J. Esher, Thomas Bowman, S. C. Breyfogel and William Horn; G. Heinmiller and S. P. Spreng, secretaries.
- 1903—October 1-21 Berlin, Ontario, Canada. Bishops, Thomas Bowman, S. C. Breyfogel and William Horn; G. Heinmiller and S. P. Spreng, secretaries.



- 1907—October 3-22      Zion Church Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Bishops, Thomas Bowman, S. C. Breyfogel, William Horn and S. P. Spreng; G. Heinmiller and S. P. Spreng, secretaries. W. H. Bucks became the English secretary after the election of S. P. Spreng to the episcopacy.
- 1911—October 5-23      East 75th Street Church, Cleveland, Ohio. Bishops, Thomas Bowman, S. C. Breyfogel, William Horn and S. P. Spreng; G. Heinmiller and W. H. Bucks, secretaries.
- 1915—October 7-25      Los Angeles, California. Superannuated bishops, Thomas Bowman, William Horn; Bishops, S. C. Breyfogel, S. P. Spreng, G. Heinmiller, and L. H. Seager; G. Heinmiller and J. H. Evans, secretaries.
- 1919—October 2-17      Zion Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa. Bishops, S. C. Breyfogel, S. P. Spreng, G. Heinmiller and L. H. Seager; Superannuated Bishop, Thomas Bowman; T. C. Meckel, secretary.
- 1922—October 5-21      Mack Avenue Church, Detroit, Michigan. Bishops, S. C. Breyfogel, S. P. Spreng, G. Heinmiller, L. H. Seager, M. T. Maze and J. F. Dunlap; A. J. Brunner, secretary.
- 1926—October 7-21      First Church, Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Bishops, S. C. Breyfogel, S. P. Spreng, L. H. Seager, M. T. Maze, J. F. Dunlap, J. S. Stamm, and S. J. Umbreit; A. J. Brunner, secretary.
- 1930—October 9-22      First Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Bishops, L. H. Seager, M. T. Maze, J. F. Dunlap, J. S. Stamm, S. J. Umbreit and G. E. Epp; Bishops Emeritus, S. C. Breyfogel and S. P. Spreng; A. J. Brunner, secretary.
- 1934—October 4-15      Calvary Church, Akron, Ohio. Bishops, J. S. Stamm, G. E. Epp, E. W. Praetorius and C. H. Stauffacher; Bishops Emeritus, S. C. Breyfogel, S. P. Spreng, L. H. Seager and M. T. Maze; I. F. Bergstresser, secretary.
- 1938—October 6-14      Moxham Church, Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Bishops, J. S. Stamm, G. E. Epp, E. W. Praetorius and C. H. Stauffacher; Bishops Emeritus, S. P. Spreng and M. T. Maze; I. F. Bergstresser, secretary.

**GENERAL CONFERENCES OF THE UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH**

- 1894—November 29-  
December 13 Grace Church, Naperville, Illinois. Bishops, R. Dubs, C. S. Haman, W. M. Stanford; William Caton, secretary.
- 1898—October 6-18 Trinity Church, Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Bishops, R. Dubs and W. M. Stanford; U. F. Swengel, secretary.
- 1902—October 9-21 First Church, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, Bishops, H. B. Hartzler and W. F. Heil; U. F. Swengel, secretary.
- 1906—October 4-15 Zion Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Bishops, H. B. Hartzler and W. F. Heil; U. F. Swengel, secretary.
- 1910—October 6-15 First Church, Canton, Ohio. Bishops, U. F. Swengel and W. H. Fouke; J. Q. A. Curry, secretary.
- 1914—October 1-10 Salem Church, Barrington, Illinois. Bishops, W. H. Fouke, R. Dubs and U. F. Swengel; J. Q. A. Curry, secretary.
- 1918—October 3-5 Trinity Church, York, Pennsylvania. Bishops, W. F. Heil and M. T. Maze; J. Q. A. Curry, secretary.
- 1922—October 5-9 Salem Church, Barrington, Illinois. Bishops, W. F. Heil and M. T. Maze; A. J. Brunner, secretary.

## APPENDIX E

### THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH, 1942

#### A. PUBLISHING HOUSES

The Evangelical Press, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Roy H. Stetler, Publisher.

Der Christliche Verlagshaus, Stuttgart, Germany, Rev. G. Dick, Publisher.

Der Christliche Verlagshaus, Bern, Switzerland, F. Gloor, Publisher.

#### B. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Albright College, Reading, Pennsylvania, Harry V. Masters, Ph.D., President.

North Central College, Naperville, Illinois, E. E. Rall, Ph.D., President.

Western Union College, Le Mars, Iowa, O. D. Kime, Sc.D., President.

Evangelical School of Theology, Reading, Pennsylvania, Rev. J. A. Heck, Th.D., President.

Evangelical Theological Seminary, Naperville, Illinois, Rev. H. R. Heininger, Ph.D., President.

The Theological Seminary at Reutlingen, Germany, Rev. Reinhold Kücklich, Ph.D., Manager; Rev. J. Schempp, Direktor.

#### C. BENEVOLENT INSTITUTIONS

Bethesda Deaconess Society, Germany.

Bethesda Deaconess Society, Switzerland and France.

Ebenezer Old People's Home, Ebenezer, New York.

Ebenezer Orphan Home, Flat Rock, Ohio.

Haven Hubbard Memorial Old People's Home, New Carlisle, Indiana.

The Lewisburg Evangelical Homes, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.

Pacific Evangelical Home for the Aged, Burbank, California.

Philadelphia Home for the Aged, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Western Old People's Home, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

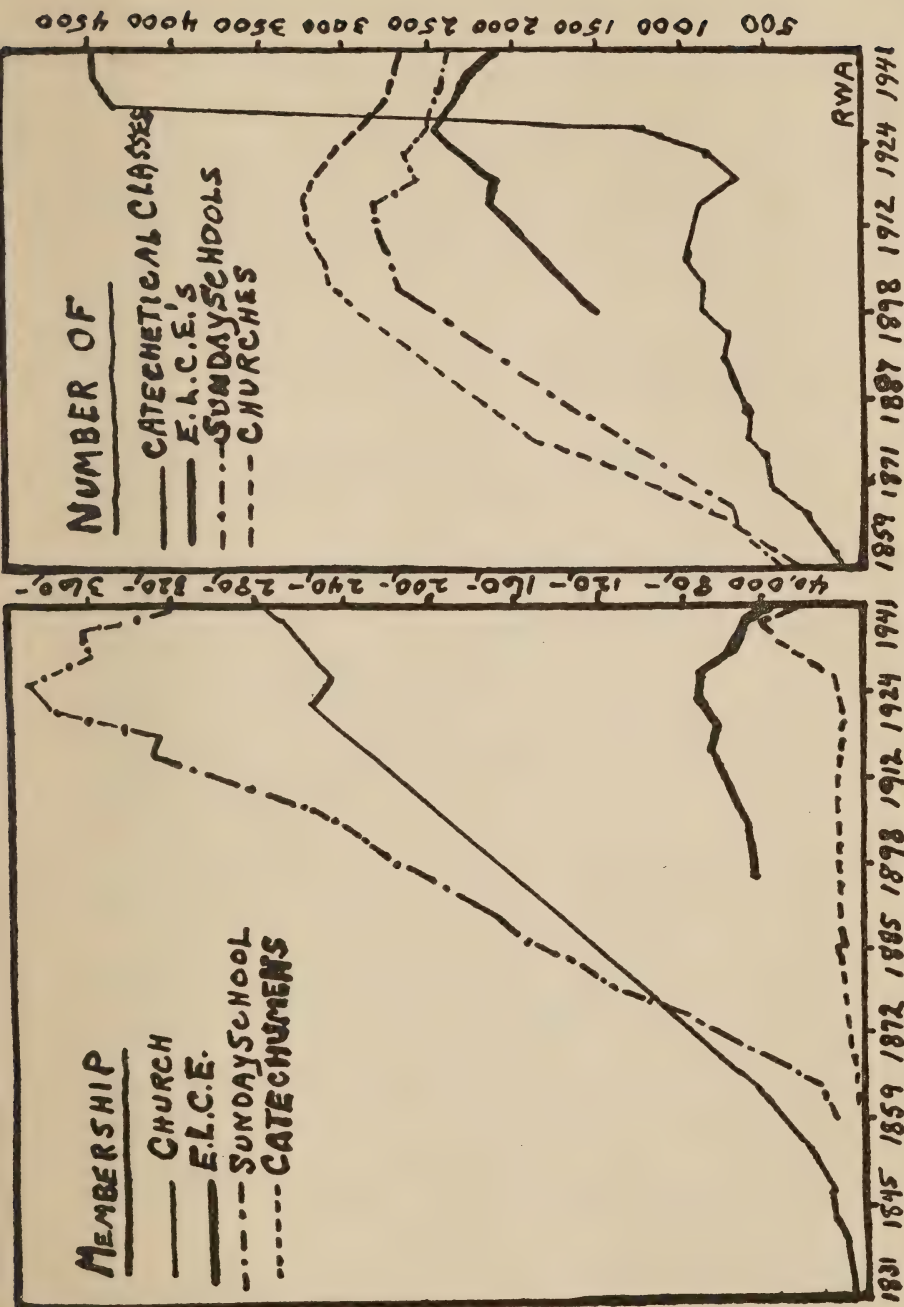
For the General Boards and other agencies of The Evangelical Church see *The Year Book of The Evangelical Church* published annually.



## APPENDIX F

THE STATISTICS OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
1941 AND GRAPHS SHOWING THE GROWTH OF  
THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN NUMBER OF  
CHURCHES AND MEMBERS, SUNDAY SCHOOLS  
AND PUPILS, CATECHETICAL CLASSES AND CATE-  
CHUMENS, AND EVANGELICAL LEAGUES OF CHRIS-  
TIAN ENDEAVOR WITH THEIR MEMBERSHIP





GRAPH SHOWING THE GROWTH OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH



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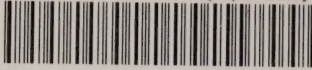
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